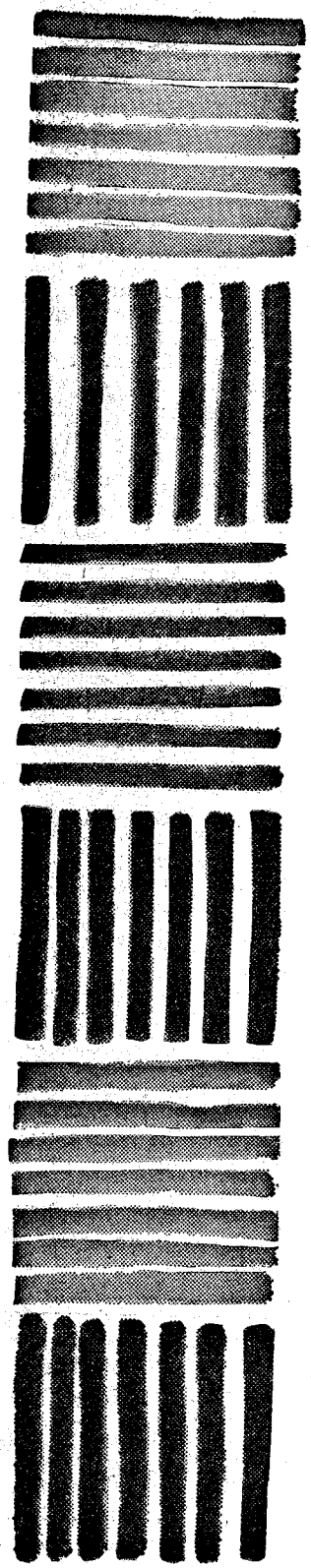
THE NATION

March 23, 1964 . . 35c



Educating Youth

THE CRUEL SOLUTION

Harry Brill

TV Commercials

GOVERNMENT DUCKS THE ISSUE

Desmond Smith

The Quebec Guerrillas

Rolf E. Spencer

Spokesman and Specter

NORMAN PODHORETZ by Nat Hentoff

JAMES PURDY by Webster Schott

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LETTERS

Name game

Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Sirs: In Robert G. Sherrill's profile of H. L. Hunt, appearing in your issue of February 24, Sun Oil Company is listed as one of a number of companies which have spent "millions of tax-deductible dollars over the past ten years to advocate rank partisanship and pro-business legislation, under the guise of making contributions to a foundation that was originally approved by the IRS as a 'nonpartisan, nonprofit organization for adult education.'"

From the context it would appear that the foundation referred to is Life Line Foundation, Inc. Just for the record, I should like to point out that a careful review of our records fails to show that Sun Oil Company has ever made any contribution to Life Line Foundation, Inc.

W. S. Woods, Jr.,
Assistant Treasurer
Sun Oil Company

Tallahassee, Fla.

Dear Sirs: In its income report for 1953, filed at the request of a Congressional committee, Life Line Foundation, Inc., listed the Dallas office of the Sun Oil Company as contributing $6,500 to Facts Forum Foundation, Inc. The name of Facts Forum was shortly thereafter changed to Life Line.

In 1953, Life Line received $217,500 from oil sources alone, these including, in addition to Sun Oil, Gulf Oil, the Ohio Oil Co., the Placid Oil Co. and oil man Hunt himself who, because he was giving to himself, was most generous of all.

Robert G. Sherrill

Not with guns

Croton-on-Hudson, N.Y.

Dear Sirs: Robert G. Sherrill, in "Florida's Railroad War: A Few Sticks of Dynamite" (Mar. 9) . . . writes that "the Wobblies talked to their implacable employers: with fire, gunshot and dynamite." Since the I.W.W. condemned violence and most frequently practiced "passive resistance" and "folded arms" during free speech fights and strikes, the reference is probably to sabotage. It is true that the I.W.W. was the first and only labor group in American history officially to advocate sabotage. . . . But to speak of . . . "fire, gunshot and dynamite" is to indulge in language characteristic of the vigilante-minded press and prosecuting attorneys of the World War I era. . . . In any case, most labor historians agree that on sabotage the Wobblies talked big but did little. Although the I.W.W. in California was charged with hundreds of crimes involving sabotage, not one case of sabotage was proved in the courtroom. . . . *Philip S. Foner*

Views of Cuba

Toronto, Can.

Dear Sirs: A reader of James O'Connor's review of my "Christianity and Revolution" in *The Nation* [Feb. 24] could very easily receive the impression that when I criticized the view that Castro's turn to communism is to be found simply and exclusively in American diplomacy, I had in mind Maurice Zeitlin and Robert Scheer's *Cuba: Tragedy in Our Hemisphere.*

While I do disagree with this work in a few minor points and on several questions of emphasis, I do not feel that the authors' account is oversimple or one-sided. Their book does concentrate on the diplomatic issues, just as mine concentrates on the religious ones. For that matter, Mr. O'Connor's forthcoming book, I understand, concentrates, à la Hugh Thomas, on the economic side. But unless he explicitly or implicitly claimed exclusive validity for his type of analysis (as Hugh Thomas does), it should not be criticized on that ground. *Leslie Dewart*

Baleful light

Tempe, Ariz.

Dear Sirs: As a college professor and officer of the local AAUP, I would like to express agreement with the editorial, "Then How About Koch?" [*The Nation*, Mar. 2] on the Prof. Revilo P. Oliver "case" and with the suggestion that Prof. Leo Koch be . . . reinstated at the University of Illinois. I believe preliminaries to this are now under way.

The thing about the Oliver "case," however . . . is that he is presumed to "believe" what he has written. But let me set the scene for the kind of provocation that might make a professor write as he has done: Here we have a man of learning and talent, unrecognized like all but a few teachers in America; life passing him by while his candle burns out lecturing to and reading the papers of immature minds. . . . Such a man turns to a simple "literary" form requiring only a fraction of his talent. But it is a form lapped up by the semi-literate, conservative newspaper-reading public. And unlike pornography — which might also gain overnight fame for him — it is protected by opinion and law. Suddenly he becomes a national figure, and having attained success and "reinforcement," he repeats the performance indefinitely, basking equally in the glory and contumely. . . . Having heard one of Robert Welch's hours-long harangues, my estimate of him is that he is naive enough not only to believe what he (Welch) writes, and also what Prof. Oliver writes, but to continue to shell out Birch Society members' money to buy unlimited amounts of the nonsense both write. *Frederic Mitchell*

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The Lesson of Cyprus

The outcome of the UN intervention in Cyprus is in doubt and will remain in doubt for months, even perhaps for years. It is clear, nevertheless, that if war between Greece and Turkey is avoided, all credit will be due to the UN. Such a war would wreck NATO and perhaps bring on the nuclear debacle which all the nations dread and, individually, seem powerless to prevent. It is ironic that an organization on which the fate of mankind hangs should be saddled with $135 million in debt, and that the more usefully it functions, the nearer it moves to bankruptcy. It is in these straits because it maintains peace-keeping forces in Yemen, the Middle East and in the Congo. Now Cyprus is to be added to the list. Hundreds of billions are spent annually for arms, but the UN must go begging among the nations for a few millions to keep a precarious peace. As of this writing, the United States and Great Britain have pledged approximately half of the estimated cost of the Cyprus venture, and the Secretary General is passing the hat for the balance.

In Cyprus catastrophe was very near when the indefatigable George Ball finally managed to get the UN into the picture. Then a great sigh of relief went up, in which even the New York *Daily News*—routinely opposed to anything smacking of internationalism—gladly joined. The pattern is familiar. There is never a kind word or a helpful suggestion for the UN, except from such dedicated organizations as the American Association for the United Nations, until the utterly intractable issue arises. Then there is frantic maneuvering, and the issue is dumped into the UN's capacious lap. After that the episode is forgotten, displeased nations refuse to pay their share of the cost, and the UN continues to live from hand to mouth.

For much of this there may be no present help, but what Americans should note is the immense utility of the UN as an instrument of major American policy, and the fact that it is able to serve this purpose because the neutral nations stand between the two great power blocs. The UN does for the United States what the United States, with all its vast armament stocks and overkill capacity, cannot do for itself. An effort had to be made to keep the Turks and the Greeks from each other's throats. If American troops had gone in, the Soviet Union might have sent its forces. Resort to the UN prevented this confrontation.

The five nonpermanent members of the Security Council, Brazil, the Ivory Coast, Bolivia, Morocco and Norway, took up the task of mediation — no gentle procedure. The Greek Cypriots, led by the intransigent Archbishop Makarios, had to be forced to reaffirm the existing treaties governing the status of Cyprus—treaties the disavowal of which would be construed as a *casus belli* by the Turks. The denouement was the necessary unanimous vote in the Council, with Adlai Stevenson and Nikolai Federenko lifting their hands together in the vote. The lion and the lamb were not lying down together, but the struggle had been localized for the time being.

The Big One

The real winner of the New Hampshire lottery was President Johnson. That Henry Cabot Lodge, the Administration's Ambassador in South Vietnam, should have won such a surprising impromptu vote of confidence should certainly discourage the Republicans from playing politics with *that* particular issue.

Now the national political spotlight can focus on the one big primary, the one that is worth the other fifteen combined. The differences between the New Hampshire and the California primaries could hardly be sharper. New Hampshire was a personal popularity contest; California is a fight for delegates. The doughnut-dunking, church-suppering, handshaking techniques will not work in California; there are far too many hands to shake. Besides, voters in California have acquired a taste for hearing the issues debated. What this means is that Senator Goldwater and Governor Rockefeller, with lavish campaign funds, can afford to dramatize, as on a national stage, the major divisions and tensions in the Republican Party. In New Hampshire the built-in odds strongly favored Senator Goldwater: the split of the "moderate" vote among Lodge, Rockefeller, Senator Smith, Stassen and, to a degree, Nixon; the almost solid backing of the state's regular Republican organization; the support of top state Republican leaders, most of whom were Goldwater delegates; the advantage of being Mr. Conservative in the eyes of small-town conservatives; and local newspaper support. Even so the combined Rockefeller-Lodge vote was twice the Senator's.

In California, Senator Goldwater will have no such advantages. The newspapers that count will be against him, even if they are not enthusiastically for Governor Rockefeller. In the Rockefeller camp are Senator Thomas Kuchel, former Governor Goodwin Knight, the popular George Christopher (until recently mayor of San Francisco), Joseph Martin, Jr., who resigned as national committeeman to support Rockefeller, Caspar Weinberger and quite a number of Mr. Nixon's former supporters. The Goldwater delegation includes none of California's Republican Congressmen and is weighted with such right-wingers as Lloyd Wright, Henry Salvatori (the H. L. Hunt of California politics) and Walter Knott, another angel of the far Right. It also includes some Nixonites, and is headed, of course, by former Senator William F. Knowland. Although still a third delegation could be qualified, it is virtually certain that the fight will develop between these two sharply differentiated delegations. The divorce-and-remarriage issue, which

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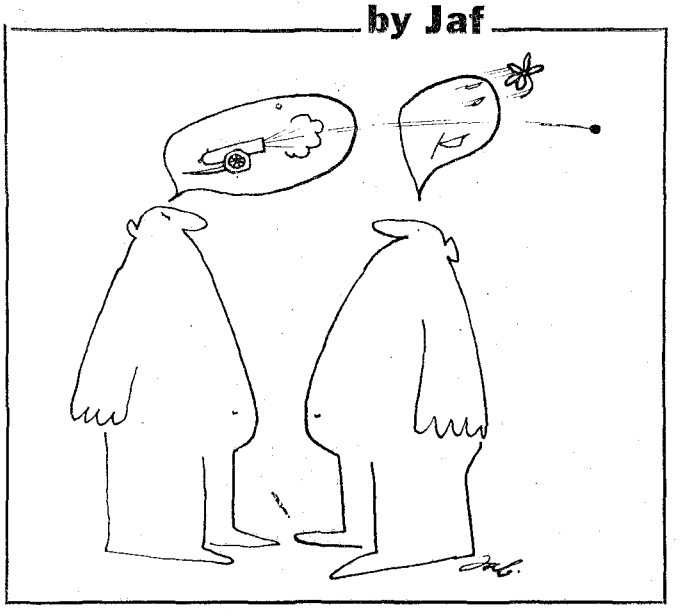
handicapped Governor Rockefeller in New Hampshire, will be negligible in California. In the background is water — an issue that will test Senator Goldwater's capacity to double talk. California and Arizona have been feuding over water for years.

Apart from delegates, the stakes will be high. The California primary will be a fight between Senator Kuchel and former Senator Knowland; between Warren-admirers and Warren-haters; it will be a fight for control of the Republican Party. Mr. Martin stated the issue with precision when he said on resigning as national committeeman that it would be a fight to determine whether or not the Republican Party in California is to become a branch of the John Birch Society. The odds favor Rockefeller as strongly on the West Coast as they were weighted against him in New England. The California primary, held just weeks in advance of the July 13th convention in San Francisco, could well determine not only the Republican nominees, but future control of the party.



Sixty-five Miles From Home

If a poll were taken to choose the most self-righteous American, Senator John McClellan would be far out in front. Before this grim-faced prober, countless gamblers, gangsters, vice lords and racketeers, big and small, have taken refuge in the Fifth Amendment. But apparently the great crusader needs the services of an ophthalmologist. From his committee room in the nation's capital he can see a pair of dice rolling in Seattle, but in his home town of Camden in Arkansas the Senator is practically blind. Only sixty-five miles away, in wide-open Hot Springs, the biggest center of organized gambling outside of Nevada has been operating for years, and Senator McClellan has been oblivious to the illegal gaming. He can crush vice everywhere but in his own bailiwick.

Attorney General Robert Kennedy, who used to be counsel for the McClellan committee, is less inhibited. Gambling has been a major industry in Hot Springs since the Civil War, but Mr. Kennedy has little respect for tradition and local sensibilities. He recently sent William G. Hundley, chief of the organized crime section in the Department of Justice, to Hot Springs. Mr. Hundley did not come to take the baths, nor was this his first trip. In 1962, the government went before a federal grand jury at Forth Smith, Arkansas; twenty-five FBI men gave testimony, forty employees of the gambling houses were questioned—and the jury returned no indictments.

The legal problem is that the federal government cannot intervene unless interstate activity can be proved. The casinos had been cashing checks for their patrons, and most of the check writers came from out of state. The checks would have to go into the mail and clear through home town banks. That would seem to be interstate commerce, but the Arkansas jury did not see it that way. Now Mr. Hundley is trying again. Since the "handle" at Hot Springs is about $100 million a year, he doubts that the operations are purely local. If he can prove connections with out-of-state mobs, some big shots in Hot Springs may go to jail.

It would seem that Mr. Hundley could use a helping hand, and who should be more eager to give aid than Senator McClellan? Nor should he be alone. Orval Faubus is governor of Arkansas, and Hot Springs lies within the 4th Congressional District, which sends Oren Harris to Congress. Mr. Harris is another apostle of virtue, especially in the area of broadcasting (but see "The Government Ducks the Issue" by Desmond Smith, p. 286). Nor should Senator J. W. Fulbright of Fayetteville, be forgotten. Now all can put their shoulders to the wheel. If they don't, some cynical Americans may begin to examine the robes of their virtue.

The Invisible A-11

There were several reasons for the President's ballyhoo about the Lockheed A-11 "interceptor" on February 29. One was that it could be used to give a boost to the languishing supersonic transport, with which its principal connection is certain advances in titanium technology. Another was that the aviation industry already had substantially complete data on the A-11 and it was leaking all over the place. McGraw-Hill's *Aviation Week* had been sitting on the story for more than a year. In return for keeping the secret, its editor asked government officials to give him some notice if the aircraft was to be declassified. He got his notice —ten minutes before the press conference.

Aviation Week at least knew what was going on and could avoid making itself ridiculous. Not so Secretary McNamara who, apparently in an attempt to conceal the fact that the A-11 was built as a follow-on for the CIA's U-2, tried to convince the newsmen that the A-11 was the IMI, or "improved manned interceptor," for which the Air Force had been yowling. Another reasonable deduction from the tangled sequence of events is that the all-powerful Senator Richard B. Russell, chairman of the Armed Services Committee, got the lowdown on the A-11 just in time to squelch a $40 million R & D appropriation for the IMI, which

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those who voted for it in the House thought was for a new aircraft, not one which was started in 1959 and had actually been flying reconnaissance over Communist territory.

The political message of the unveiling of the A-11 is "Peking take notice." Its eventual threat to the Soviets is of course not precluded, but at the moment the cold war is most intense in Asia. The Chinese reaction, likewise predictable, will be cited as further evidence of Chinese bellicosity.

If they knew what was going on, the American people would be as angry and anxious as the Chinese. In military surveillance and espionage, the Congress has abdicated whatever function it once had. The A-11 is only one instance. The Peking government has been complaining for years about incursions of U.S. aircraft, piloted by Nationalist Chinese or U.S. pilots. Unnamed government officials deny that the A-11 has been flying over China. Such denials are about as plausible as those which were issued after the Russians brought down Francis Gary Powers' U-2.

Another 'Landmark' Decision

The unanimous decision of the Supreme Court in *The New York Times* libel case is another example of the tendency to hail as judicial "landmarks" popular decisions of the Supreme Court which, though of high topical interest, are not quite that important (see editorial, "Ship of State," *The Nation*, March 2, on the Georgia Congressional districting case). What the Court has done in the *Times* case (the facts and issues are discussed in "Libel and the Free Press" by Norman Dorsen, *The Nation*, January 27) is to affirm — no doubt in the hope that it will serve as a guide and standard for state courts—the proposition that criticism of a public official about his conduct of office enjoys a qualified privilege; that is, it is privileged in the absence of "malice." But this has been the rule for many years in the more enlightened state jurisdictions. The decision still leaves the overhanging threat of actions by officials who can always charge they were libeled maliciously—with the possibility of huge verdicts based on claims for punitive damages. The *Times* can afford, perhaps, to defend such actions and carry them if necessary to the Supreme Court; other publications are not so fortunate. In the end, the Court may have to adopt Justice Goldberg's position that comment on official conduct enjoys an unqualified, i.e., an absolute, privilege. Or, if the tendency to return huge verdicts based on punitive damages continues, it may go further and adopt Justice Black's position that libel actions violate the First Amendment. This bold theory was widely scouted when Justice Black first advanced it some years ago but it has been acquiring adherents at a rapid clip. Once again the Court has acted to safeguard the Constitution from vindictive state action.

Quebec Guerrillas

Canada Faces Secession . . . . . Rolf E. Spencer

Montreal

Recent separatist raids on Canadian army arsenals in Quebec recall from history a report in which Lord Durham, Governor in Chief of British North America and Lord High Commissioner, referred to the French and British in what today is Canada as "Two Nations warring in the bosom of a single state." After 125 years this famous dictum looks like a prophecy about to come true in the most literal and frightening sense. For some time, the "single state" has seemed a fiction, confederation dying rather than sick, and now the myth of Quebec's "quiet revolution" may soon be shattered by a small army bearing stolen machine guns and other deadly paraphernalia of civil war.

Rolf E. Spencer (-Brummel) is a Canadian political scientist with a long experience of journalism for papers and magazines in England, Canada and the United States.

Last year, a terrorist organization then identified as "Quebec Liberation Front" caused death, grisly mutilation and near-panic by planting stolen explosives—a large quantity of which is still reportedly unaccounted for—in mailboxes, army installations, on railroad tracks and at the locks of the vital St. Lawrence Seaway. Not all these occurrences, incidentally, have become common knowledge, and when some of those responsible for the bomb outrages (mostly youthful members of the new French-Canadian "elite") were caught, the impression was spread abroad that the whole matter had been a storm in a teacup.

But Quebec's terrorist network of separatist cells — probably far better organized than is generally admitted—was merely lying low to regroup its forces and prepare for the next phase of its underground warfare. Soon the outsize letters ALQ (Quebec Liberation Army) appeared on city buildings and at other vantage points in Quebec, replacing the equally sinister FLQ insignia of the Quebec Liberation Front. It is thought that the ALQ, contrary to some published reports, is not the military arm of the FLQ, but rather that both sets of initials are merely a "front" to camouflage the tightly knit parent organization.

Three recent raids on Quebec armories of the Canadian army within less than a month have presumably put into the hands of separatist desperadoes enough weapons to carry out formidable operations. Two of the forays alone netted ninety-two Belgian FN semi-automatic rifles (the latest model and standard NATO equipment), thirty-six machine guns, a large quantity of side arms, 17,000 rounds of ammunition, several dozen walkie-talkie radio sets, and a number of field mortars and anti-tank bazookas. What's more, to this horde there

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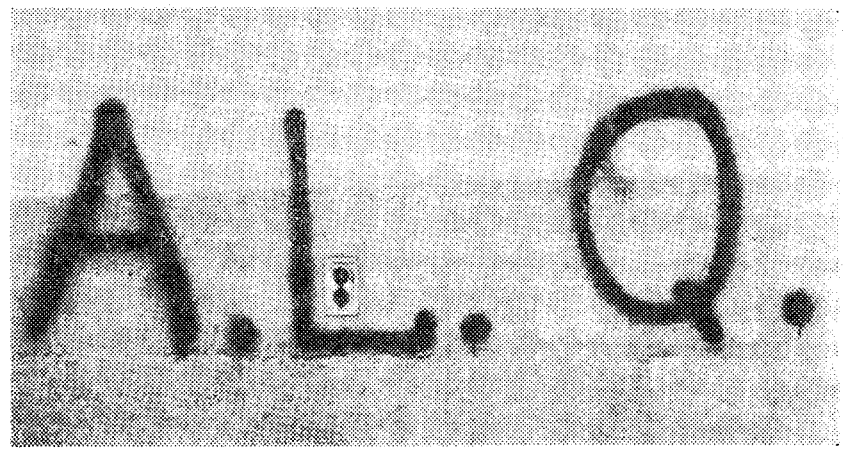
was added in the raid of February 20 an ample supply of Canadian army uniforms — a theft carrying the most sinister implications of surprise and treachery.

Indications are apparent that the well-organized raiders (mostly adolescents, led by what appear to have been adult weapons experts) may have had accomplices in entirely unexpected quarters. While, admittedly, the armories were lightly guarded, the intruders appear to have had an uncanny knowledge of the exact hour offering the best chance of success, and once inside the installations they made their way directly to the locations which concealed the types of weapons they were seeking. They seemed familiar with the identity of the guards, addressing some by their first names, and they made off in what, in appearance at any rate, were Canadian army trucks. There are other somewhat odd developments in this unhappy affair. The Canadian army authorities—conducting their own investigation—do not appear eager to take into their confidence the combined police forces now casting a tight security net across the province and "questioning" no fewer than 700 known extremists.

Reacting to the situation, the Canadian Minister of Defense, Mr. Hellyer, has properly excluded from his calculations the comforting possibility that the thefts are merely a demonstration, and is basing his actions on the probability that the arms were stolen by a group planning some form of insurrection. In the circumstances, it is thought entirely right that his order to confiscate all unguarded weapons is extended to Canadian army cadet corps, to senior militia units and even to museum pieces. The dynamics of terrorism are such that the men with the deadly arsenal must use them to avoid an anticlimax. It is therefore likely that they will feel compelled to go beyond the tragedy of last summer.

Meanwhile, the broader aspects of the apparent disintegration of Canada must not be lost sight of in anticipation of these more dramatic developments. Separatism in Quebec today assumes many forms. At the very least, it is used as a bargaining weapon by the two principal provincial parties, and in the Quebec population at large it is steadily becoming a more respectable "alternative," though there is no peaceful, constitutional means by which it could be accomplished. In *The Nation* of January 13, I stressed the dangers which current developments in Canada must sooner or later present to Americans across the border. Since then, *The New York Times* (February 24) has pointed out that secession of the French-speaking province is now viewed as a less than remote possibility. One of Canada's leading intellectuals, Professor Marcus Long of Toronto University, warned some time ago that Canada is in danger of falling apart and that she has expended too much of her emotional steam in the sterile attitudes of being first anti-British and later anti-American.



Canada Wide

The crux of the problems is Quebec, where the battle lines are drawn along racist arguments that cannot be understood rationally, but must be seen against the historical background of French Canada. What has emerged in recent years in the new nationalism was latent in the confederation of the two dissimilar peoples. Rejected by the Ancien Regime of France, what is today Quebec became a foreign island as the North American continent was finally mastered by those who spoke English alone. Unable to assimilate the pragmatism of their English-speaking neighbors, French Canadians — always seeing themselves in the role of the defeated minority—developed a religious and educational introversion, a tight, inward-looking, backward order which emphasized family, land, church and traditions with an insistence that progressive France had itself abandoned a hundred years ago. Indeed, until quite recently, Quebec was dominated by the forces in France that had resisted the results of her 1789 revolution.

If it is claimed today that English-speaking Canadians have deprived the co-partners in confederation of their fair share of modern business and industry, of equal representation in the Ottawa civil service (these are the principal grievances in the present nationalistic turmoil), it must be borne in mind that French Canadians themselves have followed their religious and historical traditions by channeling their energies into other spheres of activity. Having wakened after a long slumber, they were shocked to find how far behind they had fallen, and began clamoring for representation in fields for which they were qualified neither by background nor by upbringing. Although they found it painful, hard-pressed English Canadians have shown willingness to move over and make way for others in areas that had become their domain. But French Canadians who are qualified for top positions in business, finance and industry are at a premium, and under pressure of nationalist agitation, government corporations (like the Canadian national transportation systems) as well as large private companies are engaged in an adroit scramble to put into their board rooms as many "French names" as they can muster. It is openly admitted that Prime Minister Lester Pearson, in giving the French Canadians the largest representation they had ever enjoyed in a Canadian cabinet (ten out of twenty-seven ministerial posts) had to "scrape the bottom of the barrel" —and came up with a sure vote-winning device rather than talent.

The separatist disaster, if it now comes to pass, will have been due in large measure to the present po-

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litical configuration in Canada: a feeble, wavering and compliant central government being chivvied by young, aggressive provincial forces which are themselves pulling in different directions. Premier Jean Lesage of Quebec rode to power on a wave of nationalism expressed in the slogan, "*Maîtres Chez Nous.*" Once a close associate and friend of Prime Minister Pearson, he was swept away from his earlier, more moderate convictions and now, in order to keep favor with the fickle Quebec electorate, must swim with the violent mood that is causing leaders of all Quebec parties to outbid one another in demagogy. Maurice Lamontagne — a member of the Ottawa government, one of the few French Canadian moderates, and Pearson's principal spokesman in dealings with Quebec—put his finger on what is perhaps the real danger of separatism in a recent speech which electrified the House of Commons. He charged that, to curry popularity in the province, Quebec political leaders today make proposals to the central government which they know cannot be accepted within confederation. Pointing a finger at this "masked and hypocritical form of separatism," he warned that the separatists were not the ones to be feared. Instead he blasted the "sorcerer's apprentices of separatism, because in using this movement as an instrument of blackmail, they will provoke a flood which they will soon be unable to control."

The young and brilliant Lamontagne—labeled a "traitor" by fellow Quebecers, but a powerful figure in Ottawa these days and reportedly the author of most of Pearson's speeches—might as justifiably and more specifically have pointed at Lesage himself. The premier of Quebec has been pushed by his followers into a position so extreme as to make it almost impossible for him to regain a middle ground. Since his much-quoted oblique threat of secession ("more fiscal revenues for Quebec . . . or else"), he has been chipping away at the very foundations of confederation by demanding, and partly obtaining, powers without which the Ottawa government will not long be able to fulfill its constitutional role. The highly respected Montreal newspaper *Le Devoir*, a French Canadian voice which itself is in the very forefront of the nationalist movement and close to Lesage, recently put it this way:

> *It is now legitimate to ask what is the real aim pursued by the Quebec government. Is it really seeking a fiscal revision which will be more favorable [to Quebec], or is it gradually trying to break all links with the central government?*

One is driven to the conclusion that the only confederation in which Quebec would be willing to participate is one in which it could arrogate to itself a complete and absolute veto. Since it is not easy to imagine English Canada accepting such terms, elementary logic would demand secession or expulsion. This impasse has been further emphasized by a new group—this time in the Ottawa parliament itself—that has swung behind the "separatism by attrition" movement and is hastening the drift toward disintegration. It is led by Real Caouette, a spellbinder with French Canadians and leader of the "Ralliement Creditiste" party which — although a comparatively small splinter group in the precarious federal balance of parties at present—could easily repeat its near-landslide feat of an earlier election. An expert at gauging public feeling in Quebec, this astute politician calls for "absolute control" by the Quebec government over currency, trade, immigration and all direct and indirect taxes collected in the province.

And the alternative? Mr. Caouette described it at a press conference in a phrasing that is peculiarly his own: "That's the ultimatum. If we don't get that, it's definite. Bang! It's all over. We get out of confederation."

If Lesage himself has not come out in direct support of separatism, his colleagues in the government have left little doubt where their sympathies lie. A notable example is his chief lieutenant, the erratic, articulate and fiery Resources Minister, René Lavesque. He has repeatedly set time limits on French Canadian demands, and threatened that Quebec will "get out of the bad bargain of confederation." His reference to a future independent state on the shores of the St. Lawrence River has jarred the complacency of English-speaking Canadians. The Quebec Revenue Minister Eric Kierans—himself a member of the English community—has quite recently made the surprising statement that such a state would be economically viable. Such pronouncements add force to Levesque's outspoken challenge: "We think we can get along better without the rest of Canada than they can without us." More significantly still, when the ruling Quebec (Lesage) Liberal Party met not long ago to chart its future, it aligned itself by implication with the terrorist movement by voting down a motion presented by English-speaking delegates to issue a collective condemnation of the extreme "Quebec Liberation Front." It is small wonder that Quebec extremists take their cue from "responsible politicians" and decide to carry matters one step farther.

The extreme statements coming from all parties of the Quebec political spectrum, including the "moderate" government, have roused fierce antagonism outside the province. These flames could easily be fanned into a dangerous situation, making the "Quebec versus the rest of Canada" conflict the dominant issue of the next election. Pearson's principal opponent, Progressive Conservative leader, John Diefenbaker (with negligible electoral chances in French Canada and therefore with little to lose) has already asked whether Ottawa has surrendered to Quebec, and there are growing indications of support in English-speaking Canada for his "melting pot" approach, which is diametrically opposed to the present government's "two nation" concept and to the basic French Canadian philosophy. Said one of his parliamentary lieutenants, with a new note of defiance: "Surely we do not have to go back into a little hole when they [Quebec] make these extreme demands."

There are other indications too that English Canada is stiffening its back. The western provinces are bewildered and angered by Pearson's preoccupation with bi-culturalism and bi-lingualism and some of the premiers, especially those of Manitoba and British Columbia provinces, have denounced outright Ottawa's preferential treatment of Lesage. Moreover, throughout Canada (and especially in Manitoba where Canadians of Ukrainian origin form the largest minority) there has been mounting vociferous opposition to the concept of "La Dualité Canadienne" which seems to ignore the third of Canada's pop-

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ulation that is neither French nor English. It is quite obvious that the cracks in confederation are widening.

While pressing for independence from the dominance of the "Anglo-Saxons," French Canadians show an almost pathetic desire to take their values from France and to preserve their links with the mother country. Not infrequently, however, it seems that this sentimental affection is not returned. There were rumors, for instance, that President de Gaulle sympathized with Quebec separatism and would offer an independent French Canadian state certain advantageous political and economic liaisons with France. Incredible though it may seem to serious observers, some circles in Quebec showed faith in this mirage. Otherwise, André Malraux, Minister for Culture in the de Gaulle government, would not have troubled to demolish it before leaving Canada in the latter part of last year. On starting his visit in French Canada, he had spoken warmly of "links" between Quebec and its motherland. However, his audience obviously took him too literally, and in a subsequent speech he set the record straight by explaining that he had meant only artistic links. Political links, he said, would be "dangerous" and "ridiculous." These are strong words and may be taken as indicating what de Gaulle thinks, for members of the present French regime do not speak off the cuff.

Canada's problems, and her impotence and incompetence in dealing with them, are even now not understood abroad. If they were, the country's reputation as one of the more solid middle powers in the Western alliance would probably not survive. Canadian forces should never have been requested for a peace-keeping role in Cyprus—they may soon be needed at home for a situation not unlike that in the Mediterranean island. Outside ignorance of Canadian conditions is due not only to apathy and lack of interest—a large share of the blame must be put on Ottawa. This was perhaps best expressed by one of Canada's leading military men (the vice-chief of air staff, in close touch with North American Air Defense), who put the politicians to shame when he deplored the failure of the country to communicate to its alliance partners the breadth and intensity of its difficulties.

Even if matters do not take a violent turn (as well they might), the present dialogue between Ottawa and Quebec City will continue to erode the very foundation of Canada. After 200 years of association with the only large French ethnic group outside the mother country, and after nearly 100 years of formal confederation, the uneasy union is set on a collision course.

The present cleavage between the "founding partners" is different from and far more serious than previous friction which has arisen at intervals. First, the "agonizing reappraisal" of the brittle constitutional arrangement has reached the highest circles of public life. Second, there is the new element that the present discontent is neither confined to special groups nor focused on one specific issue—such as the wartime agitation against conscription which was fanned for the most part by the Roman Catholic clergy. Instead it appears that a whole complex of long-submerged economical, political, social and emotional factors has combined to create a crisis not only for Quebec, but for Canada as a whole. (Few would doubt the early doom of a rump-Canada consisting, in the manner of Pakistan, of two parts severed from each other by the vast gap of an independent Quebec in the middle.)

Furthermore, this is a dialogue within a larger dialogue, a twin search for identity. French Canada, claiming to have been the victim of the larger English Canada, is seeking an identity. Spurred on by the same — peculiarly Canadian — feelings of insecurity and inferiority, Ottawa claims that it is threatened by subtle encroachments from its big neighbor to the south. Thus, a creeping anti-Americanism (masquerading as pro-Canadianism) has also become an integral part of Canadian political life.

TV Commercials

The Government Ducks the Issue . . Desmond Smith

The broadcasting industry has never taken kindly to advice from outsiders. It has especially resented the regulatory activities of the Federal Communications Commission, holding the view that the FCC is in business only as a traffic policeman, to keep the channels reasonably clear and prevent the kind of technical chaos that jammed the airways before 1930. For its part the FCC has always claimed (but rarely enforced) the further responsibility of determining how the medium is to be used for the best interest of the public. For three decades now, ever since the creation of the FCC, the broadcasting industry has pinned its faith on the motto of St. Cyr: "Attack is the best defense." In that time it has accused the commission of being paternalistic, socialistic, monopolistic and, inevitably, un-American. The FCC, in turn, has taken its lumps with a docility alien to other regulatory agencies. Ironically, the occasional appearance of a "strong" chairman such as James Fly or, more recently, Newton Minow, has served only to strengthen the industry. "Minow was just what this business needed," said one Midwestern broadcaster. "Hell, he made a lot of Congressmen wonder who was running the country — Congress or the FCC."

Last summer, the FCC decided to do something about what it called the "overcommercialization issue." For some time, the agency had been receiving a growing volume of angry letters from listeners who objected to loud, brash and incessant commercials on radio and television. Further, it had amassed evidence from its own monitoring bureau of really scandalous abuse

Desmond Smith is a regular contributor to The Economist *(London).*

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Bill Strong

of the broadcasting privilege. But essentially the spark came from Newton Minow, who was then about to retire. It was to be his farewell present to the industry, and his vote committed the commission, by the narrow margin of 4 to 3, to do something about "overcommercialization."

The FCC proposed a rule that, in effect, would have put a ceiling on the proportion of time that AM, FM and TV broadcasters could allot to commercials. Somewhat blandly, the commission announced that it had in mind adopting the advertising time limits recommended by the National Association of Broadcasters itself in its purely voluntary Code of Ethics. Confronted with this suggestion, the broadcasters plunged into their biggest fight in years. By the end of January, the battle was all but over. The FCC in a quiet announcement let the trade know that it was dropping its proposals. Behind the FCC's defeat and the broadcasters' victory lies a history of bumbling that goes back to the very origins of the FCC.

The actual birth of the agency was auspicious enough. Congress set up the Federal Radio Commission in 1927, at the request of the infant radio industry itself. Hoover, who was Secretary of Commerce at the time, later declared that the FRC was the only regulatory agency in his experience that came into being through the pleadings of the industry it was to regulate. But conditions in broadcasting were bedlam, with stations raising their power at will, broadcasting at all hours of the day, and jamming one another's signals. Seven years later, with the passage of the Communications Act of 1934, the New Deal changed the name of the Federal Radio Commission to the Federal Communications Commission. The Act, a patchwork quilt of legislation, showed all the marks of hasty construction. The idea was to lump under a single management all communication, whether by wire or radio, and including telegraph, telephone and broadcasting. The drafters of the Act cribbed liberally from past utilities legislation, and peppered it with the nice sounding phrase, "the public interest, convenience, or necessity." What exactly is the public interest? In the area of telegraph and telephone, the public requires privacy, reliability and convenience at reasonable rates. In the case of a radio channel licensed for use by aircraft or by the police, the public's safety is directly involved. But what about broadcasting to the general public? In this field the phrase loses all precision and becomes a lawyer's idea of heaven. The result has been a thirty-year war of litigation and lost tempers.

From time to time, the FCC has wrestled with the public-interest clause in the hope of providing some bench mark for the broadcasters. Its "Blue Book," issued in 1946, was an ambitious attempt to set out standards of programing. It stated:

> *Broadcasting stations are licensed to serve the public and not for the purpose of furthering the private or selfish interests of individuals or groups of individuals. The standard of public interest, convenience or necessity means nothing if it does not mean this. The emphasis should be on the* receiving *of service, and the standard of "public interest, convenience or necessity" should be construed accordingly.*

Which, of course, left the *interpretation* of public interest as vague as ever. One specific standard introduced in the Blue Book was the broadcaster's obligation to provide balanced programs. It was not good enough to please only the mass audience that an advertiser wanted to reach. A broadcaster, said the FCC, was in duty bound to offer, as well, material that satisfied the tastes of minorities in the community. The FCC split programs into two main types, commercial and sustaining, and ruled that a proper balance had to be maintained between them. Few noticed at the time that the FCC neglected to define what proportions made up a "balanced program schedule."

The truth is that there can never be a satisfactory answer to such questions until parallel consideration is given to the economic implications of the Blue Book. The air is indeed a resource belonging to the public, but broadcasting is a business. And it is difficult to see how any laws, rules or "blue book" can be made binding on a wholly private industry, unless attention is also given to its commercial underpinnings.

Nevertheless, the succession of lawyers who have made up the bulk of FCC commissioners have been content to hector the industry with quotations of principle from a bygone age. Not long ago, a chairman of the FCC subjected a Congressional committee to an arsenal of forty-year-old quotations including this one: "Broadcasting stations are not given these great privileges by the U.S. Government for the primary benefit of advertisers." What on earth does a quotation like that mean in the present context of the industry?

The basic fact of broadcasting life today is not hard to grasp: As long as people demand a "free" broadcasting system, rejecting the idea of license fees, extra taxes or government control, someone must foot the bill. In the American system the advertiser does that by buying time—not the station's time, but *your* time. A station is a license to broadcast, some real estate and a transmitter. Its stock in trade is its audience—your attention—vouched for, in a highly doubtful manner, by an audience rating.

This is hardly difficult to understand, but for some obscure reason, broadcasting economics is a nettle that the FCC has never been eager to grasp. It has dealt with the broadcasters on a quasi-legal plane. As a result, it has been criticized for its semi-open dealings with the special group of attorneys and lobbyists who regularly appear for clients before its hearings. The public is rarely, if ever, present. Last year the FCC announced that since it had the power to impose advertising time limits, it planned to hold hearings with a view to making some rules that would, in future, govern the minutes of commercials

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a broadcaster could inject into any broadcast hour. This represented a major switch from the lax tradition of letting the broadcaster regulate himself, which the FCC had been content to follow from its earliest days.

The self-regulation era began with good intentions. The first industry-wide Code of Ethics (1929), actually included a clause forbidding advertising between 7 P.M. and 11 P.M. Bit by bit, the stations chipped away at their code. By the end of World War II, the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) had revised the code to permit commercial time up to twelve minutes in the hour. Even so, there were plenty of violations; since the Code of Ethics invokes no penalties, transgression proved both safe and profitable. When TV arrived in the late 1940s, the NAB was forced by its membership to increase the commercial maximum to eighteen minutes per hour, and in recent years the broadcasters have consistently ignored even this figure. The FCC has monitored stations that transmitted as much as thirty-five minutes of advertising in every hour. One radio station submitted logs to the FCC at license renewal time which bore the following legend: "Disk jockeys, play a record between each commercial." Anyone who has watched late movies on TV is familiar with the double and triple spotting that breaks up the picture into five-minute chapters.

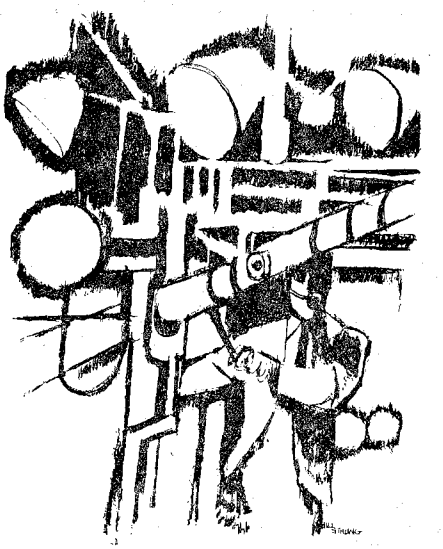
The FCC has severely censured the broadcasters, sometimes by name, for allowing these conditions to exist. The charge is that profits have been placed ahead of public interest, but since the FCC has never defined the economics of public interest, choosing instead to allow the industry to regulate itself, it is hard to see anything but window dressing in its gestures.

A striking example of the commission's economic myopia has been its on-again, off-again attitude toward station licensing. In the past dozen years, the FCC granted licenses for some 3,000 new radio stations and more than 600 television stations. The rush of applicants thereupon became so great that the FCC applied a "partial freeze" on licenses. Immediately the going price for a licensed station zoomed. A New York radio station that had cost $450,000 in 1953 was sold for $10 million in 1962. Another station in a considerably smaller city leapfrogged from $575,000 in 1957 to $750,000 in 1960, and then to $1 million in 1961. The result is that new owners are under pressure to earn back the inflation in the investment as quickly as possible. This in turn has tended to reduce "sustaining" public service programing in favor of sold time.

Newton Minow, appointed chairman of the FCC by President Kennedy, captured the nation's attention with his now-famous "vast wasteland" speech; it was his maiden speech before an audience of broadcasters. Though a lawyer himself, Minow showed impatience with the FCC's quasi-legal meanderings. Instead, he concentrated on stirring the public's indignation. His attitude was that if the public no longer cared about abuses, violations and malpractice in broadcasting, the FCC must arouse them again by exposing obvious wrongs in the old crusading vein. The indispensable corollary was that the FCC should provide a sound economic argument, so that people might understand not only what had gone wrong, but also what goes on in broadcasting.

But Minow worked with a divided group of commissioners. Shortly before turning over his job to E. William Henry (another Kennedy appointment), he won a narrow victory in the action, mentioned above, designed to do something about the problem of overcommercialization. Three commissioners voted against any action in this field. When the news reached Capitol Hill, Oren Harris, the powerful and somewhat enigmatic chairman of the House Commerce Committee, declared he was firmly against the FCC's proposal. The broadcasters took up the fight. A main theme, constantly repeated, was that financial disaster would confront the broadcasters if the FCC proposal became law. In August, 1963, Rep. Walter Rogers (Texas) introduced HR 8316, a bill forbidding the FCC ever to dictate "any standards with respect to length and frequency of advertisements." HR 8316 was swiftly followed into the House hopper by five similar bills, and the impression created by all this Congressional activity was of a carefully planned move to head off, either by bluff or showdown, the FCC's proposal. Insiders believe that behind the overall strategy was Rep. Oren Harris himself. At first glance this may seem out of keeping with the "fearless crusader" role that Harris likes to play in the public prints, but in fact it is not entirely implausible.

Ed James, Washington correspondent for the authoritative *Television Magazine*, wrote (July, 1963): "For all the furor that Harris' many investigations have kicked up, and the human wreckage they have left in their wake, astonishingly little legislation has come out of them. The reason is Harris is content to stir up the problems and then let the industry itself settle them." Harris was embarrassingly caught in a conflict-of-interest situation some years ago (for a nominal $500 he had been given a lucrative interest in a TV station).



According to James, he has long been a grateful recipient of election campaign funds from the broadcasting industry.

While the overcommercialization issue moved toward a confrontation, the ground was rapidly shifted under the FCC. From being a conflict between the broadcasters' self-interest and the FCC's solicitude for the public interest, the issue was reshaped to turn on the question of who had the power to legislate in the matter—the FCC or Congress. On November 5, last year, Representative Rogers, as chairman of the subcommittee on communications and power (a child of the House Commerce Committee), opened hearings on HR 8316. In retrospect, it was an amazing performance. Rogers called more than forty witnesses to testify in favor

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of HR 8316; he invited only the FCC to testify against the bill. True to its legal tradition, the FCC ignored a substantial economic argument and chose to stand on legal ground. The commission developed two main arguments. First, the Rogers measure should wait until the FCC, having held its own hearings on commercial time, should reach a firm decision on its proposal. This, the FCC argued, would give Congress an opportunity to "review a precise rule." Second, the FCC urged that no law be passed that would interfere with the broad authority that Congress (in 1934) had given the FCC in order that it "might deal effectively with this dynamic industry." In stating its case, the FCC dipped liberally into the past, even quoting from statements made during the days of the Federal Radio Commission. The subcommittee yawned. While the FCC chose to illustrate its argument with historical precedent, the subcommittee bore down hard on the effects the FCC proposal might have on broadcasting. In the following exchange, it soon became plain that Chairman Henry had not done his economic homework:

JOHN BENNETT (Mich.): You say you have the authority to eliminate it [advertising] entirely; but now if you have authority to limit advertising, you do it on the theory that it is in the public interest before you can do that, is that not true?

CHAIRMAN HENRY: That is correct.

BENNETT: All right. So you don't consider the economics of the broadcaster?

HENRY: Well, the economics. . . .

BENNETT: Now just a minute. So that if you come up with a decision or a policy that X number of minutes of advertising is in the public interest, therefore, that is the number that you are going to permit and no more, that may put some broadcaster out of business would it not?

HENRY: It might; yes.

BENNETT: Now if it does, you are still acting within your authority?

HENRY: No; I wouldn't say we were. I think he would be entitled to a hearing to show that it would put him out of business, and if our judgment was arbitrary and said, "We don't care if it is going to put you out of business, we are going to do it anyhow," then a court would reverse us.

At this point, Bennett, picking up an FCC statement, read part of it to Henry:

BENNETT (reading from FCC document): "We have decided that as a matter of good taste there should only be five commercials per hour, and that is in the public interest."

Now if that breaks some of the people in the industry as a matter of economics, you are not concerned with that?

HENRY: No, we would obviously be concerned about it. Economics does enter into the picture, but again as a matter of degree.

It was perhaps inevitable that this confrontation between the FCC and Congress should be hostile, because the issue at stake was the right to make decisions. Did the FCC have the power to control advertising (and by extension, programing) or did Congress? What ground rules should the FCC use in reaching its decisions? All of this involves a great deal of controversy, and those who oppose the abuses of broadcasting must suggest an alternative. It is not enough to offer vague phrases or good intentions. How can the public interest and the broadcasters' financial interest be reconciled, so that any meaningful change can take place? It became clear during the House hearings that a monumental ignorance prevails — among the broadcasters, of the FCC's problems and goals; in the FCC, about the economics of present-day broadcasting.

In January, the FCC dropped its rule-making proposal, Chairman Henry declaring he was pleased to announce that it had been a unanimous decision. Representative Rogers smelled victory and announced he had no intention of stopping House action on HR 8316. Last month his persistence paid off—the measure passed the House by more than a two-thirds majority.

The pity of all this is that the FCC, the broadcasting industry and Congress continue to run on separate tracks. It is beside the point to blame the public for ignorance and indifference when it is offered no information. The most urgent job before the FCC is to get knowledge flowing, not just to the broadcasters, but to the public as well. It must also decide what tactics it intends to use. One thing is certain—if it is to continue as a regulatory agency, it cannot afford another such stinging defeat from Congress.

Atomic Power

The Fear and the Promise . . . . . Carl Dreher

In "The Big Atom: Solving the Water Shortage" (*The Nation*, December 28, 1963), I presented the case for large-scale nuclear-power plants which would produce both low-cost electricity and fresh water from the sea. Since considerable opposition has developed even to the medium-sized nuclear-powered electric generating stations that have been projected for a number of locations around the country, it is time to examine the arguments for and against nuclear power, one hopes in a rational and nonpartisan spirit. In every technological development, and likewise in the opposition to it, different intellectual levels can be discerned. In the present case, I have found the pro arguments generally more respectable, but neither side has a monopoly on nonsense. Rep. Craig Hosmer (R., Calif.) was quoted in the *Los Angeles Times* (September 14, 1963) as charging that opposition to the nuclear reactor planned for Bodega Head was part of a "nuclear witch hunt" that played on the public's "hysterical fear" of radiation. The proponents of nuclear power may well reflect that they can deal with their enemies, but God preserve them from some of their friends.

The public *is* afraid of radiation, and not without cause. In most people's minds radiation is associated with Hiroshima, Nagasaki, nuclear weapons and weapons testing. They know something about fallout. Since the cold war involves recurrent threat and counterthreat, not

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only radiation, but nuclear energy in general, has acquired a bad name, whether it comes out of a bomb or a power reactor. The U.S. Atomic Energy Commission has made matters worse. It is a complex organization and some of its divisions do an admirable job, but basically — one has only to look at its budgets — it has functioned as a weapons manufacturing and testing body, and consequently one which has tended to play down the possible somatic and genetic damage that results from testing. When Dr. Harold A. Knapp of the AEC's own Fallout Studies Branch suggested that children living near the Nevada test site might have received medically significant doses to the thyroid from iodine fallout, the commission at first disputed his results. Later, when a group at the University of Utah and the St. Louis Committee for Nuclear Information arrived at similar conclusions, the commission conceded that "a few" children might have been affected.

There is hope for democracy when unofficial bodies succeed in monitoring official ones, but as far as nuclear power is concerned the results have not been happy. As a part of the scientific community came to suspect the commission's reliability, distrust filtered down to the general public and to people living in neighborhoods where nuclear plants were proposed. The differences between bomb testing and power-plant operation were not taken into account, nor did people understand that in one case the assurances of the AEC might be dubious and in another truthful. The promoters of nuclear power have suffered in consequence.

The spread of fear from the destructive uses of nuclear energy to the beneficial ones is psychologically understandable, but from a quantitative standpoint it makes little sense. The radioactivity released by a nuclear power plant or, for that matter, by nuclear testing to date (although the latter is significantly larger in some areas) is microscopic compared with what would be let loose by even a few bombs launched in anger. The chances of an American dying in a nuclear showdown precipitated by some such incident as the refusal to lower the tailgate of a troop carrier on the Berlin Autobahn may not seem very large at the moment; nevertheless they are probably thousands of times greater than his chances of suffering harm from a nearby nuclear power installation. Yet the big risk is generally ignored, while anticipation of the small risk may arouse violent local protest.

The same curious psychology prevails in regard to the possible accidental explosion of nuclear weapons. Thermonuclear bombs of large caliber have been routinely transported by air over many parts of the United States in military training operations, and hardly anyone on the ground has given them a thought. These bombs are unarmed, i.e., not prepared for firing, so that the danger of a nuclear explosion is "so remote as to be negligible," in the words of an Air Force spokesman. Still, a bomb is designed to explode, while a power plant is designed *not* to explode. The chances of a catastrophe in either case are so small that it would be logical to ignore both, but a furore is raised over the civilian application and not over the military one. Likewise, in *Change, Hope, and the Bomb*, David E. Lilienthal, after inveighing against "the potential hazards to life and health of hundreds of thousands of people in densely populated areas adjacent to [nuclear] power plants," adds: "Military applications, including the nuclear submarine power plant, stand in a different category, of course."

Those who equate national defense, security, survival, etc., with the ability to win the cold war or, if necessary, a nuclear war, do not hesitate to subject themselves and others to whatever radiation dosage may be involved. Edward Teller, being convinced that we should resume testing in the atmosphere, minimizes the radiation hazard not only because he regards it as slight, but because for him the Russians are the overriding menace. At the other extreme, Linus Pauling not only opposes irradiating anyone in the cause of "deterrence" or improvements in nuclear weapons, but extrapolates radiation damage unto the tenth generation.

The manufacturers of power reactors and the associated machinery, and their utility customers, occupy an intermediate position. By all indications, the radioactive effluent of their plants is incapable of doing any somatic damage. They take the most optimistic view of genetic damage by assuming that what doesn't hurt the living will do no harm to the unborn or, if harm is done, it is inconsequential when weighed against the benefits. Since the radiation level at the boundary of a nuclear power plant may be as little as a hundredth of natural background radiation, somatic damage can be safely neglected. But if there is no genetic threshold, if radiation down to the last rem will kill or sicken someone sometime in the future, then nuclear power can be had only at some cost in human misery.

This assumption is made by those who oppose nuclear power plants in populated areas. The Consolidated Edison Company wanted to install a reactor in their Ravenswood (Queens County, N.Y.) plant — a project since abandoned, at least for the time being. A spokesman for the *ad hoc* committee formed to oppose the plan wrote:

> *Ultimately the calculated risk Con Ed is willing to take by constructing a nuclear reactor in the heart of New York City is based on a savings in the costs of transmission lines. . . . Would the savings . . . be adequate to compensate any of us for the loss of one child's life from radiation poisoning? Would the savings . . . be adequate to compensate for one still-born or deformed child of a future generation, a victim of genetic radiation damage? What morality or ethics would permit such a base bargain?*

The fact is that our accepted morality sanctions such a bargain whenever, on balance, a social gain can be shown. Technology saves thousands of lives for every one that it takes. Medicine, surgery, electric power, electronics, nucleonics are tied together by a thousand filaments. We do not get these communal benefits without cost in human life. The cost of a long high-voltage transmission line is not only of the order of $100 million, but every year a certain number of boys climb line towers and are killed. Children are electrocuted by toasters, radio and TV receivers and other household appliances. Several hundred are burned to death every year in fires resulting from defective heating plants. The children who die annually in automobile accidents are numbered in the thousands. They die now and they will die in future generations.

If it should turn out that no radiation-damage threshold exists, there will be some sacrifice of future lives

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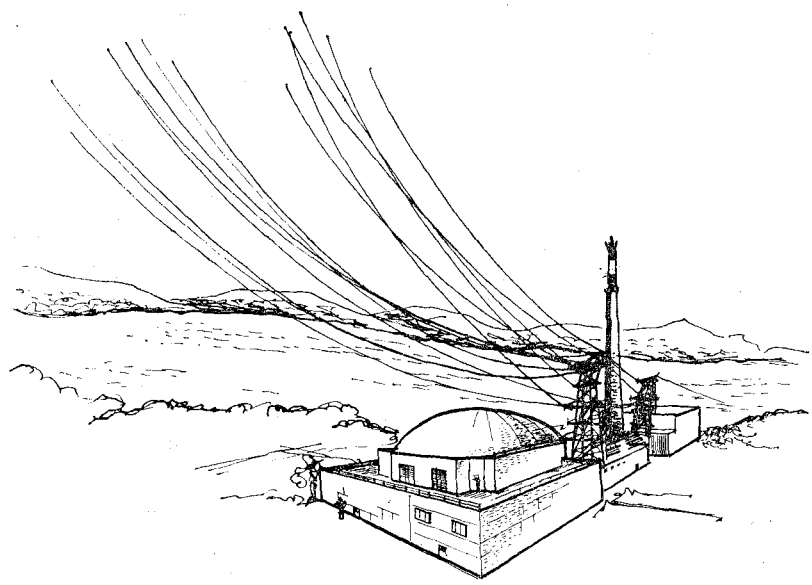
when a family moves from a sea level location to a city at the altitude of, say, Denver, where cosmic radiation is appreciably higher. Such considerations may be carried to absurd lengths. You may doom one of your descendants by folding your hands in your lap while wearing a wrist watch with a luminescent dial. The General Electric Company has figures showing that such a watch, worn daily, radiates some 3,000 millirems to the wrist in one year, compared with perhaps one millirem from a nearby nuclear power plant. Some of that 3,000 millirems would certainly reach the gonads. And diagnostic X-rays would, of course, be entirely out of the question.



Con Edison Nuclear Plant, Indian Point, N.Y.

Nuclear power plants are designed not only to run safely, but to fail safely. Routinely, the stack vents radioactive gas at intervals, but the quantity is only a few hundred thousandths of a gram per day and does not add measurably to background radiation. If a significant amount should start going up the stack, the vent would be closed automatically and the plant shut down if necessary. All radiation existing in or emitted by the plant is constantly monitored. One expert who was dubious of the Ravenswood project, nevertheless estimated that an individual standing at the fence for twenty-four hours a day throughout the year would receive only about the equivalent of natural background radiation, and of course this would be greatly attenuated by walls and distance in the case of nearby residences.

Continuity of electric service is vital and the utilities have a good record in this respect. A runaway in a nuclear generating station would probably melt down the core and put the station out of commission for a considerable time. The fact that the utilities have built 1,000 megawatts of such plants in the United States (and about the same in England) indicates confidence that they can avoid "excursions." Aside from the safety devices with which the plants are loaded, current models are designed to be self-controlling—if an excursion starts and the temperature of the fuel goes up, the fission process slows down immediately and the temperature falls back to normal.

A meltdown, though extremely unlikely, is possible. A nuclear explosion is impossible. Ordinary uranium (atomic weight 238) must be enriched with the fissionable 235 variety to the extent of about 90 per cent to make a bomb, and then an intricate compression mechanism is required to produce the explosion. A power reactor contains only about 3 per cent fissionable uranium. A steam or chemical explosion could conceivably occur, the probability being about the same as in a conventional plant.

The often-cited SL-1 accident at the National Reactor Testing Station in Idaho in 1961, in which three Army enlisted men lost their lives, was a chemical explosion in an experimental boiling-water reactor designed to provide mobile power for military forces operating in remote areas. The fuel was of a volatile type not used in commercial reactors, and there was no safety device to prevent the kind of accident that occurred. Nothing like this could happen in a utility generating station. The public has never suffered any harm, or been subjected to measurable radiation exposure, from any commercial nuclear installation or, for that matter, from the military installations in which fissionable materials are manufactured.

Even if a power reactor should suffer a sudden loss of coolant—the liquid or gas that carries heat away from the core to the section of the plant where it is put to use—and a series of other failures which would release reactor poisons into the building, they would be contained by the concentric shells of steel and concrete which are now a standard design feature, or the contents would be automatically discharged into a pool beneath the reactor. The radioactive material could not escape from the building in any dangerous quantity.

If the AEC's fallout information policies have contributed to public anxiety regarding radiation, I think it must be conceded that in the matter of siting and licensing power plants the agency has carried out its duties in a democratic, cautious and scientific spirit. At the outset, the applicant must submit a safeguards analysis of the proposed plant, including the predicted behavior in the event of the "maximum credible accident," which is really a cluster of accidents, each highly improbable, occurring simultaneously or in brief sequence. Copies of the application are made available to the public and the press by the AEC's Division of Licensing and Regulation. The AEC does not rely solely on its own engineers for evaluation of the hazards, but calls on its Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards, which provides an independent assessment. This document likewise becomes a part of the public record. Next, a formal public hearing is held in the neighborhood of the proposed installation by the AEC's Atomic Safety and Licensing Board. All official and unofficial organizations and individuals are free to voice their views. The Board considers the evidence and grants or refuses a construction permit. The five AEC commissioners approve or disapprove the decision by majority vote. If the decision has been favorable in both instances, a construc-

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tion permit is issued, usually on a provisional basis. AEC inspectors supervise every detail of the building of the plant. If it conforms to the design specifications and the rules of the Commission, after a thirty-day waiting period during which petitions of intervention may be filed, an operating license is issued. Still supervised by the AEC, the plant is put through a checkout procedure and gradually built up from a low-power level to the maximum permitted under the license. This period of preliminary operation may last as long as a year, or even longer. The operators as well as the station are licensed by the AEC. They are examined for their understanding of general reactor technology, and on the design and control features of the particular equipment they are to operate. Periodic inspections by the AEC's Division of Compliance insure that all conditions of the license are met. The license is revocable. All incidents affecting the safety of the plant must be reported and likewise are entered in the public record. Wherever there is bureaucracy, there is the possibility of bureaucratic corruption or incompetence, but the evidence to date is that this elaborate program for the authorization of nuclear power plants is scrupulously and intelligently administered.

The rapid progress of nuclear safety engineering has encouraged a new philosophy of power-plant location. The AEC originally laid down isolation rules or "site guides," with the objective of keeping nuclear plants away from people. The bigger the plant and the bigger the population center, the farther apart the two had to be. The theory was never very plausible. A typical nuclear power station is Con Edison's Indian Point plant, located in northern Westchester County, 27.5 miles from Times Square. Indian Point is not a very large plant: its output (discounting the part due to superheating with oil) is only 163 megawatts. Yet, if all the poisons—the "fission product inventory"—were accidentally released and the wind were blowing from the north or northwest, there would be heavy irradiation of millions of persons in Westchester, western Connecticut, New York City, Long Island and New Jersey.

No one pays much attention to this possibility, least of all the people living only a fraction of a mile from the plant. Yet, if the distance factor should continue to govern the location of nuclear power plants, the very large ones described in my earlier article would be ruled out entirely. In the areas where they are going to be needed, they can be considered only if sufficient safeguards can be provided to "engineer out" the distance factors.

Waste disposal is another controversial subject but, in the estimation of the people who know most about it, the hazards and difficulties have been exaggerated. As the fuel is converted partially into fission products—"nuclear ash"—the reactor no longer produces power efficiently and the fuel elements must be replaced. The reactor is designed for this operation, which may be continuous in the case of the proposed mammoth plants, or may take place only every few years. The spent fuel elements are withdrawn, under water in some cases or with other shielding, enclosed in heavy casks, and shipped to the reprocessing plant. If the generating plant is large enough, presumably the reprocessing plant might be located adjacent to it. In shipment, however, the material is not more of a hazard than materials like chlorine, cyanide, industrial explosives, etc. The volume is not large; if all of New York City's electric power were produced from nuclear reactors, the waste accumulated in a year would occupy about a cubic yard in concentrated form. Diluted and with inert materials present, the actual volume which must be stored is ten or twenty times this, but it is still small on the basis of the power produced. Permanent storage sites are being developed in dry salt domes and caves.

We should not be slaves to technology and do whatever this or that band of engineers and administrators fancies would be interesting or profitable, but when the risk is small and the potential benefits great, we are justified in pressing ahead. Rightly or wrongly, but at any rate by act of Congress, the AEC has spent $1.3 billion of the people's money to create a nuclear power industry; an even larger amount has been contributed by the electric rate payers. The public, then, already has some $3 billion invested in nuclear power — and that's not counting the AEC's overbuying of uranium and overkill-weapons output. We might as well get something out of it all. Subsidies in various guises will continue for a while longer, but ultimately the industry will be self-sustaining and the investment will pay off in lower power costs and other benefits.

Cheap water and cheap electricity are alike vital to national prosperity. The demand for electricity has doubled nationally every ten years. In some areas it has been growing more rapidly: the system peak of Southern California Edison went up from 1,731.6 megawatts in 1952 to 4,160 in 1962, with 7,500 projected for 1970. Edison's reserve, and that of Los Angeles Water & Power, are each about 20 per cent; these margins must be maintained. *All* sources must be exploited—falling water, coal, oil, natural gas and nuclear energy. One large supplier, General Public Utilities Corporation, with a service area covering parts of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, is participating in a mine-mouth project, involving generation of electric power at the bituminous coal mines, with a minimum of fuel transport; an extra-high voltage (500,000 volts) transmission line to bring the power to the load centers; four pumped-storage projects, in which water is raised by reversible pump-turbines into elevated reservoirs at times when surplus power is available and allowed to run down when the load peaks; and a 600-megawatt nuclear generating station.

Six hundred megawatts is large by present standards, but only because nuclear plants have been designed in average fossil-fuel sizes. It was the only way to get started, but as larger plants are built efficiency will go up and nuclear-generated electricity will become less expensive than electricity from any other source, except perhaps some of the largest and most favorably situated hydro plants. The present nuclear plants are only stepping stones toward single plants of about the aggregate size of major systems like American Electric Power, Pacific Gas & Electric, Commonwealth Edison, Consolidated Edison, Southern California Edison, and others whose peak loads run to 4,000 megawatts and higher.

An incidental argument for nuclear power is that, except for hydro power, it is the cleanest way of generating electricity. This is a factor of some importance in places

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where air pollution is a menace to health. Automobiles are the principal source of pollution, but the utilities' contribution has assumed serious proportions in some areas as steam plants have taken an ever-increasing share of the load. Prior to 1941, Los Angeles received practically all its electricity from hydro sources but, with the growth of population, the Department of Water and Power has had to resort more and more to steam, which now accounts for 84 per cent of the total. Southern California Edison's ratio varies between 80 and 90 per cent steam, depending on water conditions from year to year.

Continuity of service is also a factor. If nuclear plants can be located close to the load centers, nuclear power should become the most reliable, as well as the cheapest, source. Thousand-mile, extra-high voltage lines may suffer outages at times. Where, as in New York City, coal and oil must be barged in to the generating stations, strikes or civil disorders may interrupt service. It is usually impractical to store more than a month's supply of fuel, and the storage space is expensive. A spare nuclear core occupies little volume and is not radioactive until it is put in operation.

Nuclear power can help to preserve world peace. The British have gone in heavily for nuclear generating stations, largely because the Suez crisis showed how vulnerable their oil-supply lines were. The impending plight of Israel involves water instead of oil, but nuclear power is probably the answer there as well. When—if ever—the Arab masses come to understand the conflict between their interests and those of their rulers and, concomitantly, the identity of their interests with those of the Jews, the North African and Arabian deserts can likewise be transformed by nuclear distillation of sea water.

This prospect seems to me a decisive argument for the development of large-scale nuclear power. Eventually the plants will probably be of the breeder type; the output might be converted to weapons-grade plutonium. Rather than construe this as an argument against nuclear power, we should face the basic issue—whether nuclear weapons and delivery systems can be brought under control by disarmament or possession by a supra-national agency. The hope that fissionable materials can remain the monopoly of the United States, Britain, France and the Soviet Union is absurd. Before the end of the century, either the N-power problem will have been solved, or monomaniacal nationalism will bring mankind to ruin. Nuclear power forces us to think of what cannot be evaded or postponed.

Biography of a Tenement

From Pasture to Squalor . . . . .

Peter S. McGhee

Yet large sections of the city remain a bleak wasteland of broken plaster and fetid hallways, where every day children are bitten by rats. In these backwaters of despair more than a million people live—a number equal to the entire population of Baltimore.

At the core of the problem are 43,000 old law tenements. . . .

The New York Times
January 20, 1964

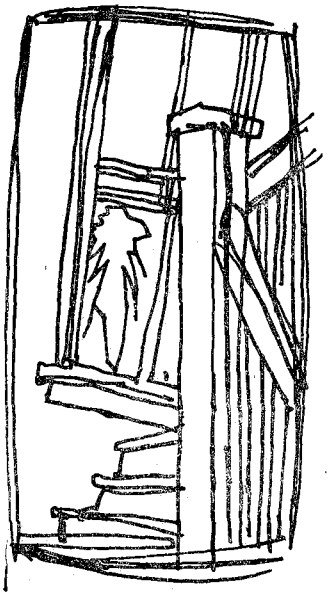
Sixteen East 117th Street is on lot 62, block 1622, census tract 184, Manhattan, in a district known as Harlem. In appearance, it is much like every other building on the street, as the street itself is much like every other in the neighborhood. Except in details, the history of one house is the history of all.

According to city archives, block 1622 lay "wholly within the Samson Benson Farm, passed to Peter Poillon in 1826." Poillon partitioned the land and sold it, lot 62 and a tract in midtown going to George Wolff in 1827 for $260 "lawful money of the United States."

Peter S. McGhee is a free-lance journalist who lives in one of the 42,999 other "old law" tenements.

It remained in the Wolff family until 1870, when it was bought by Isaias Meyer. A quarter of a century later, the executors of his estate sold lot 62 to William E. Finn, and soon thereafter that fertile fragment of Samson Benson's south pasture was crowned with a tenement house five stories tall.

Sixteen East 117th Street was



just one of thousands of houses rushed into being in time to beat the restrictions of the Tenement House Law of 1901. ("Old law" means only this: built before 1901.)

In 1905, the building was bought by Jacob and Goldie Eckstein. Of all its owners before or since, none owned the building at 16 East 117th Street so long or treated it so well as they, who lived on the ground floor and rented out the apartments above. They held sway there for sixteen years, collecting rents, making payments on the mortgage, maintaining the building. The neighborhood—sedate, middle class, Jewish—was quiet and very well cared for.

That tranquil era ended for 16 East 117th Street in the autumn of 1921, when the Ecksteins sold the building and joined the flight of the Jews from Harlem. The exodus had started before that: the neighborhood barriers north and south had been breached by 1920. For 117th Street between Fifth and Madison the question was not whether the change would come, but whether it would be brought by the Negroes moving down from 125th Street or

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by the Puerto Ricans moving up from 110th. As it happened, Spanish Harlem stopped at 116th Street.

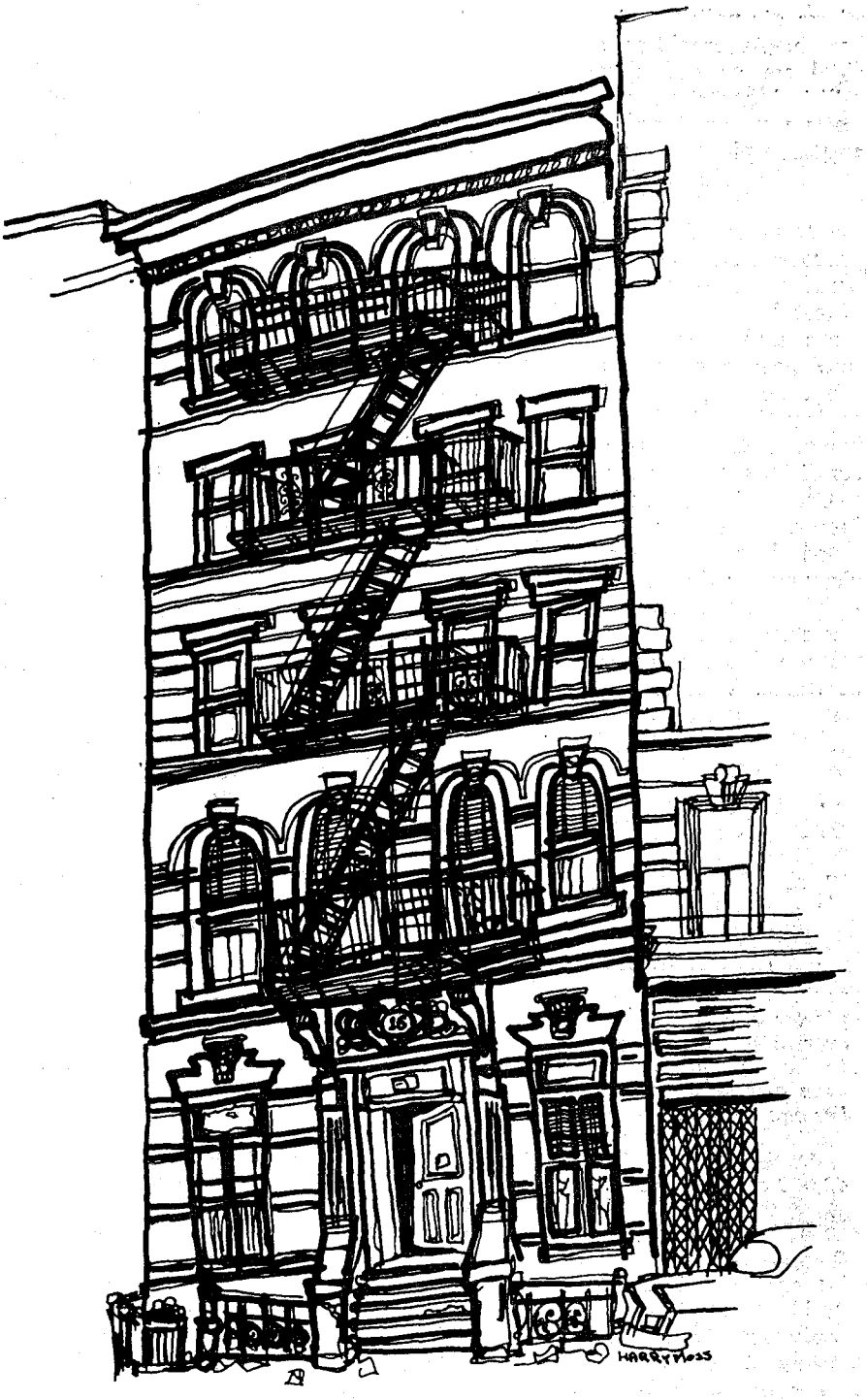
The newcomers to 117th Street were, generally, uneducated and unskilled migrants from the South. They did not get as much pay as whites who did the same work; they paid more than whites for equivalent and worse housing. And to them, as to the Jews, whose ghetto became their ghetto, much of the city was out of bounds.

When the Ecksteins sold the building, an ownership scramble started that lasted for ten years and involved thirteen owners, the property passing from one to the next like the broom in a broom dance. The music and the dancing stopped in 1932. The thirteenth owner, like a lot of other people just then, was stuck for cash and the mortgage was foreclosed.

What had happened meanwhile to the object of all this merry trading and speculation? It had suffered. Changes in ownership brought changes in attitude; pride was less a motive, profit more. By 1930, 16 East 117th Street was delivering its share to statistics on infant mortality, TB and diphtheria death rates, fatal fires, vehicle deaths involving children, private welfare activity, buildings violations, absentee landlords, etc., that made the neighborhood one of the worst in the city.

In 1934, the city's first study of the need for slum clearance was published. Twelve areas in the five boroughs were selected as most urgent candidates for slum clearance. Block 1622 and 16 East 117th Street were in the middle of "area No. 6." In the same year, New York Casualty Company, which had acquired it by foreclosure, sold lot 62 and its surmounting slum to Circle Estates, the twenty-fifth owner of record in thirty-five years. Apparently it was a careful choice: Circle Estates held the building for eight years. The Buildings Department file on the property (opened in 1929 with nine violations) shows that only twenty-nine violations were logged against it in that time.

But 1943, the start of the second decade of recognized slumdom for 16 East 117th, also marked the coming of rent control and a new ownership shuffle began. Circle Estates sold the building in late December, a few months before



rents in its fifteen apartments were frozen at between $23 and $30 a month. It changed hands three times in 1944, twice in 1948, once in 1949, once in 1950; the music and the dancing had started again.

As owners multiplied, so did the violations. As the building decayed, so did the neighborhood. Census reports found it 25 per cent deteriorated in 1940, 34 per cent deteriorated in 1950, 61 per cent deteriorated in 1960. "Deteriorated housing," as defined in the reports, "needs more repair than would be provided in the course of regular maintenance."

Why wasn't it maintained? Owners will charge that rent control, by restricting income from a building, limits what can be spent on upkeep after the fixed costs—mortgage, taxes, fuel, etc.—are met. But none of the owners of 16 East 117th Street applied to raise rents under the "fair return" provision of the regulations, which since 1947 has permitted increases to those who aren't getting at least 6 per cent return on their investment plus 2

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per cent for depreciation on the building. (There were rent increases, but all were applied for on other grounds.) The implication must be that for the owners, at least, a fair return was had by all.

Over equal increments of time the same measure of neglect will produce successively greater measures of decay: buildings accelerate downhill. At 16 East 117th Street the dumbwaiter was plastered over, and the superintendent replaced by a handy man. Then the handy man was made to be handy in so many places that he became handy in none. When the bell system failed, it was left unrepaired; when the lock was broken, the front door stood open. Tenants endured broken windows, falling plaster, peeling paint, leaking pipes, cracked sinks and toilets, clogged drains, rotten window frames, jammed doors, unlighted halls, unswept stairs, winter days and nights without heat. Then, too, there were rats. Traps were set and poisons laid out, but, though some of the rats were caught and some wandered off to die in the walls, a population established itself and battened and bred on the trash that wasn't collected and the garbage left out in the halls.

Tenants' complaints eventually brought Buildings or Health Department inspections. Between 1952 and 1962, 159 violations of the multiple dwelling code were found in the building. Then, in September of 1962, one inspection alone turned up more than sixty violations; the very slow wrath of the city began to stir. When the infractions had gone uncorrected for several months, a criminal complaint was drawn up against Robert Fitzgerald, president of Robam Equities, which owned the building. That complaint is still unprosecuted; Fitzgerald is in Germany and not expected back soon.

But he couldn't take the building with him. The major mortgagee was Louis Zalaznick, whose Shamrock Equities (of 50 Broadway) had sold the building to Fitzgerald's Robam Equities (of 50 Broadway) in May of 1961. When Fitzgerald didn't meet his mortgage payments, a brand new company was created, incorporated and manned: One Can Realty Co. Ruth Zalaznick, 697 Northumberland Road, Teaneck, N.J. (which is as far away as Germany for some purposes) was its president and only officer. It took title on July 25, 1963.

Given the ordinary course of events, the preceding thirty years of profitable slumdom might well have been followed by at least as many more. That sanguine expectation was shattered, but by two events that must be considered extraordinary. The first was a fire nearby. A Buildings Department chief inspector, on 117th Street to examine the fire-damaged building, noted the dilapidation of No. 16. On his orders a special cellar-to-roof inspection was made on October 8. Seventy-two violations of the multiple-dwelling code were found, a neatly typed multi-carboned report of which was disgorged by the department's IBM computer only two months later and mailed to the owner not long after. By then, the second event was in progress.

Under the leadership of Jesse Gray, head of the pacific-sounding Community Council on Housing, the tenants of 16 East 117th in December had joined the tenants of fifty-seven other Harlem buildings in a rent strike. They withheld their December rents, and were served with eviction notices. In court, however, Judge Guy Ribaudo decided that the tenants of 16 East 117 were entitled to withhold rent from the owner until he had removed the violations and corrected the "shocking conditions" in the building.

From this point the history of 16 East 117th Street ceases to resemble that of the buildings around it. The rent strike was news; everything connected with it—buildings, rats, Jesse Gray, tenants—was news. The president of One Can Realty Company, out in Teaneck, was soon telling callers that she had resigned all "association" with 16 East 117th Street and One Can Realty Company.

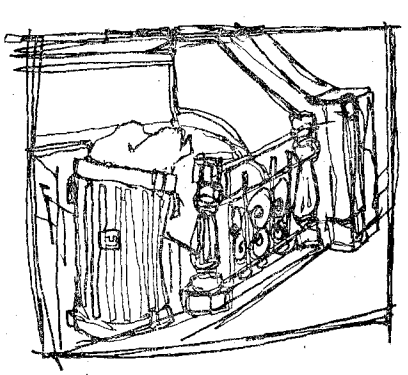
Thus abandoned by owner and under siege by tenants, 16 East 117th Street has recently drifted into the reluctant embrace of the city's receivership program, under which the violations will be removed. The prospects are good that the tenants will soon have more nearly habitable homes.

Sixteen East 117th Street is an "old law" tenement. There are 43,000 of them in New York City, imprisoning 900,000 mostly impoverished people in conditions that it is gross flattery to describe as "substandard." What distinguishes 16 East from most of the rest is not the past, not the shambles it has become, but the future, the fact that anything is being done, or will be, not just for the building but for the building and the tenants who live in it. (There are plenty of contractors willing to replace old-law tenements with middle income or luxury housing.)

For this minimal and painfully realized advance in the housing prospects of but a few people, the rent strike and the city's receivership program together are, as whip and jackass, prime mover. But the idea of Jesse Gray's being abroad in the city with a whip disquiets the keepers of the law. The legislature has before it several proposals to legalize rent strikes under city administration. By "legalize" is meant a system of orderly procedures leading eventually "in extreme cases" to certification of buildings as hazards to health, and thereafter the application of rents to the cost of correcting the hazardous conditions. There is, of course, no place for Jesse Gray in this procedure, which must be administered by already overburdened departments. In effect, his whip is turned over to the jackass.

It may be that the deep revolutionary intent of the rent strike — to assert that the misery of the poor should not be a source of profit to anyone, least of all to those responsible for it — may justify disarming Jesse Gray, but the move is bound to retard the coming of the New Deal to Harlem. (Never mind the Fair Deal, the New Frontier, the Fair Shake: first things first.)

What may be hoped for from the receivership program, acting without the sting of Gray's whip, can be judged from Real Estate Commissioner Lazarus' recent warning to Mayor Wagner. The program is "a good way to go broke," he told the Mayor. The city cannot cope



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with the worst of the slums through receivership action unless it changes its policy so that "humanity comes before economics." (Disarmament has a better chance.)

It has long been known, of course, that the city couldn't handle the slum problem by itself. The 1934 slum clearance survey, which recognized the squalor of block 1622, led directly to the creation of the Housing Authority, under whose auspices more than 450,000 people are now housed in state and federally aided low-income projects. There are, however, at least that many more who need to get in. Last year there were 100,000 new applicants and only 4,500 new units of low-income housing were opened. That rate of construction is apparently the best that can be hoped for under the President's housing proposal, now before Congress, which asks for a little more — New York City's share would be 7,500 units annually — but is expected to be cut. "It will take fifty years to meet the housing needs of the welfare population at the present rate of construction," according to Welfare Commissioner Dumpson. And another 100 years to house all of the poor.

By then, of course, the slums of today will have been replaced by the slums of tomorrow; the "old law" tenements of today will have been supplanted "at the core of the problem" by some new "old law" dwelling places; and the phrase "old law," with its comforting allusions to a time past and an ancient discredited law, will be absolving new men and new laws.

Educating Youth

The Cruel Solution . . . . . Harry Brill

Dispute as to the causes and cures of unemployment takes up much of the social attention of contemporary life. Yet organizations as disparate as the AFL-CIO and the United States Chamber of Commerce somehow suspend their many differences when they approach the issue of teen-age unemployment. Whether the high jobless rate among *adults* is attributed to lags in economic growth, deficiencies in training, inadequate wages or high taxes, the assessment of *teen-age* unemployment iterates with singular monotony that inadequate training and education are the causes. As might be expected, the remedy prescribed is *more* training and education. This has become the "conventional wisdom" of the 1960s.

The argument that the unemployed are jobless because they lack qualifications for the jobs available is called the structural position. Structuralists argue that there is a direct relation between training and the rate of unemployment. White-collar and skilled blue-collar occupations demand more training than unskilled occupations and have lower unemployment rates. Therefore, unless youth receive more training, they will congregate in the unskilled, high-unemployment occupations. But a simpler explanation is that youth is jobless because the jobs are not there.

Harry Brill is currently engaged in sociological research on unemployment for the Institute of Industrial Relations, University of California.

The structural position is weak because it does not fully consider all of the relevant information. The following table is from the annual report published by the Department of Labor.

Unemployment Among Males, 1962

Experienced Workers	All Ages	Ages 14-19
Professional and technical	1.7%	9.7%
Clerical	3.4	6.6
Skilled	5.0	9.2
Semi-Skilled	6.6	9.5
Unskilled	12.3	9.3

The reader may be surprised that any teen-agers with full-time work experience should be classified as professional and technical workers. According to the 1960 U.S. Census, these include, in part, more than 6,000 designers and draftsmen, almost 2,000 accountants, as well as engineers and public school teachers. Teen-agers in skilled occupations, another relatively high classification, include more than 65,000 mechanics and repairmen and more than 12,000 carpenters.

The structural argument ignores a state of affairs that is vividly demonstrated in column two of the table. Teen-agers have unemployment rates much higher than adults in *all* of the occupational groups except for the unskilled. And the incidence of unemployment is so much greater for teen-agers that even the high-status occupations offer no job security. In fact, if youth could be magically shifted overnight from unskilled to professional positions, the unemployment rate would rise, since young professionals experience slightly more joblessness than do their unskilled peers. By contrast, a similar shift among adults would reduce the unemployment rate dramatically. Among teen-agers, only clerical workers have a noticeable lower rate, but 6.6 per cent is a rate that could be construed as low only by depression standards.

Hard-to-fill job vacancies certainly exist, but at least in the case of clerical workers, I doubt that it matters much. Imagine for a moment that as many as half of all jobless teen-age clerical workers are out of work because they lack the training for available jobs. Even if we could swiftly mold the adolescent clay to meet the appropriate requirements, it turns out that the *overall* unemployment rate for experienced teen-agers would fall no more than two-tenths of 1 per cent.

The lower seniority status of teen-agers is one major factor accounting for their much higher rate of joblessness. If the seniority principle were removed the gaps would narrow, but I doubt that *adults* would welcome the idea. An exception to the seniority pattern exists just where you would expect to find it—among the unskilled group. At this level experience counts less, if at all, and trade-union demands are least effective.

The higher unemployment rate among youth may also be related

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to the positions they occupy *within* each major occupational category. The percentage of out-of-work carpenters, for example, is twice that for skilled workers as a whole, and, as noted earlier, a large number of skilled teen-age workers are carpenters. Also, the more stable occupations may make greater educational demands, whether or not these demands are justified — a point I shall return to in a moment. If entrance standards were relaxed, this too would narrow the adult-teen-age gap.

The averages in the table do not include entrants to the labor force who have yet to hold their first jobs, and these make up a sizable portion of all unemployed youth. It is unlikely that many of these inexperienced youngsters could qualify for jobs in the professional or skilled categories, but even if they could the aggregate unemployment rate among teen-agers would remain unaffected, since the rates of joblessness in both of these categories are comparable to that of the unskilled.

Where vacancies exist, seniority is irrelevant: hard-to-fill positions will go to the first qualified applicant of whatever age. To be sure, work is available for engineers, teachers and other professional workers. Note, though, that there are 70 million workers today. Reducing unemployment by only 1 per cent requires the discovery of 700,000 new jobs.

And how many vacancies are there? The Department of Labor has done no comprehensive research on this question, but several private groups have pursued it in areas where there are presumed to be job shortages. Though some of these studies make sweeping assertions on current job prospects, their claims are unsupported. To cite one instance, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce states in the May, 1959, issue of its journal that development of appropriate skills in the Chicago labor force would markedly lower the 7.5 per cent unemployment rate in that city. The report estimates that education and training would reduce the overall unemployment figure to 200,000, but the total number of jobless at the time of the survey is never mentioned. Checking, I found that unemployment in Chicago, even during the recession year of 1958, averaged 208,000. Therefore, a reduction to 200,000 unemployed would leave the rate well above 7 per cent.

The lack of training or education, then, is not what accounts for high unemployment rates among the young. However, the structuralists have a last line of defense: youth is a disease that we all outgrow. That is, even though training and education may have no immediate effect on their unemployment, they will ultimately open the doors to employment. Or conversely, without training and education unemployed teen-agers can only become unemployed adults. The structuralists contend that the transformations in the job structure now being brought about by automation demand higher education and more sophisticated skills.

It is true that great changes are taking place in the occupational structure. White-collar and professional workers currently make up respectively 46.8 per cent and 11.5 per cent of the labor force; in 1900 they accounted for 28 per cent and 7 per cent. The percentage of blue-collar jobs is decreasing, and unskilled laborers constitute less than 6 per cent of the labor force.

Many of the conclusions drawn from study of these changes are, however, misleading. Economist Walter Buckingham has pointed out that more complicated machines do not necessarily require more complicated skills to tend them. Displaced blue-collar workers who had developed their skills over a period of several years have frequently learned to operate automated equipment in a few weeks.

Case after case can be cited to show that, contrary to popular belief, automation has not upgraded workers. In fact, employees are frequently downgraded after being put to work with automated equipment. In a survey of metal firms, more than 70 per cent stated that automation either downgraded or left unchanged the skill level of their personnel. Similar reports have been made by the automobile industry, insurance, office and accounting sectors of various industries and many other types of businesses.

It is more likely that "titles" rather than skills are being upgraded. A Department of Labor study of a large, mechanized bakery shows that in most cases transfers represented downgrading to a lower rated job. In one instance, a maintenance department worker who had shown interest in the newly installed system was given on-the-job training for several weeks. He proved capable and kept the job. The Department of Labor notes that the job shift meant an "upgrading," but maintenance is a skilled occupation and is not learned in weeks. If training is the basis for evaluating the relative status of various jobs, this transfer to the professional and technical category represents a *decline* in status.

The suggestion that a well-trained professional could be replaced on short notice by a worker in overalls is a pill hard to swallow, but it is none the less a distinct possibility. College-trained engineers, or for that matter, college-trained "anythings" may develop certain talents and skills, but training for the sake of training should not be confused with training for a vocation. The fact that educational requirements have been raised for certain occupations is not proof that the demands of the occupation itself have actually increased.

Except insofar as they keep the younger generation in school, and thus for a time out of the labor pool, intensified training and education will fail to solve youth's unemployment problem. Should we become the victims of a sudden "prosperity," as during World War II and the Korean War, whatever lags might exist in training could be resolved in a remarkably brief period of time.

But even if changing occupational demands favored prolonged periods of formal training, there is no reason to be unduly concerned on this score. According to a much neglected section in the recent *Manpower Report of the President*, the total number of new college graduates, taken together with new entrants from other sources, are expected to meet the aggregate manpower needs in professional and related occupations.

To demand that teen-agers pursue goals that are as substantial as soap bubbles can only deepen their sense of aimlessness and confusion. Such a program may provide jobs for social workers, counselors and teachers but it will not change the unemployment rate of youth one iota. Unemployment is a problem of the society as a whole; it is not part of the process of growing up and it will not be cured by maturity.

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Cool, Like Blocked

DOINGS AND UNDOINGS: The Fifties and After in American Writing. By Norman Podhoretz. Farrar, Straus & Co. 371 pp. $4.95.

Nat Hentoff

At thirty-four, Norman Podhoretz, editor of *Commentary*, has assembled "a collection of occasional essays, written over a period of about ten years" for various magazines. The first two sections, "Traditions" and "Responses," consist of literary criticism. The perspective, however, is that of a writer for whom "literature is not an end in itself" but rather "a mode of public discourse that either illuminates or fails to illuminate the common ground on which we live." Accordingly, the third section, "The World Out There," is a logical extension of Podhoretz's interests as he moves from television drama and Harry Truman to Hannah Arendt on Eichmann and "My Negro Problem — and Ours."

The book merits attention, not so much for Podhoretz's analytical skills — which are uneven and rarely of seizing quality—but for what it tells about the problems of the sophisticated American liberal in his thirties who, as Podhoretz says, wants to know from literature as well as from "the social and political and cultural disputes of the day" what "they suggest about the possibilities of life in his time."

Despite individual differences of emphasis, tone and final judgment, Podhoretz does largely speak to and for a significant group of early-middle-aged intellectuals: skeptical empiricists who are nevertheless anxious to make more sense of their lives, private and public, with a view to increasing their own emotional size and also to shaping a society in which "testing our beliefs and acting out our attitudes in public" will have much greater impact than has long been possible (even though government officials do read *Commentary*).

The difficulty many liberal intellectuals in this age range have in reaching their goal is underlined in a 1957 Podhoretz essay on the younger generation of intellectuals at that time. "Everything that happens to these young people," Podhoretz wrote from their midst, "seems immediately to be milked of its 'meaning' before it has a chance to make an impact; everything must be understood before it gets out of control. The world is seen at a distant remove, commented on quietly and wisely, never struggled with or confronted full in the face."

That description still holds for most of those intellectuals seven years later. Their knowledge of how transmogrified the revolutionary certainties of the 1930s became, and their rising awareness of the inadequacies of what Podhoretz terms "revisionist liberalism" in the 1950s, have left them properly suspicious of both doctrinaire attitudes and the perfectibility of many institutions as they now stand. With gnawing, unspent passion, they become Reform Democrats or, politically immobilized, they mourn the absence of a "Left." In the meantime, a new breed of younger intellectuals is trying to form that Left from a thus far inchoate coalition of civil rights actionists and dispossessed workers, without thinking to look for guidance from *Commentary* or *Dissent*, let alone the *Partisan Review*.

Many in Podhoretz's generation —all maverick exceptions admitted— have indeed been caught "at a distant remove" from the organic possibilities of change, personal and public, in this decade. Some went to work for Kennedy and either twisted themselves into the "pragmatic" idealism of that administration or departed in silence. Others are increasingly anxious to open "communication" with the new genre of young, militant Northern Negro leadership but find themselves ambivalent toward such emotionally explosive demands for "instant" integration as are dramatized in the school boycotts. (Not one white liberal group supported the February school boycott in New York, although the American Jewish Congress was more empathic than most. Nor did any committee of free-lance intellectuals come out for the boycott through any form of public declaration.)

I cite the chasm between these white liberal intellectuals and Negroes in this context because the current massing of forces in the North for the struggle beyond civil rights is the first issue since McCarthy — the early-middle-aged intellectuals having largely remained aloof from peace movements — which has directly confronted them with the choice between becoming deeply involved in a "cause" or picking their spots on the sidelines. White liberals in their thirties and forties are increasingly hurt (and angered, when they allow the emotion) by the distrust and contempt with which they are regarded by those in "the movement." But what they do not realize is that the division between them and the Negro vanguard is due less to differences in strategy and to estimates of workable timetables than it is to the Negroes' recognition that these white liberals are unable to commit themselves *fully* to anything. "They're cool," as one SNCC member puts it, "but cool like blocked."

What has all this to do with *Doings and Undoings*? Let us see, taking each section in sequence.

"Traditions" is concerned with writers who were established before the 1950s. Here Podhoretz is at his most capable. His chapters on Edmund Wilson, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Nathanael West, John O'Hara and Mary McCarthy are crisp and forcefully cohesive. Whether Podhoretz agrees with them or not, none of these figures presents any threat to his own sense of self, to his own verities at this time in this place. He is able to place them in perspective with judicious balance, and in the piece on Fitzgerald, with particular astuteness.

In this same section, Podhoretz also shows himself able (in "Masses, Classes & Social Criticism") to make the rather easy distinction between the latter-day insularity of Dwight Macdonald and the continuing resiliency and bold relevancy of Paul Goodman. That essay indicates with particular clarity that Podhoretz is himself unwilling to escape into insularity although he remains constricted, as we shall see, by his limited ability to confront the most complex contemporary issues "full in the face."

The second segment of the book, "Responses," is devoted mostly to writers who emerged since the 1940s and includes competent but seldom remarkable explorations of "Jewish Culture and the Intellectuals," "The

Nat Hentoff, author of The Jazz Life (*Dial*) *and* Peace Agitator: The Story of A. J. Muste (*Macmillan*), *will have* The New Equality, *an analysis of race relations in America, published by Viking Press in June.*

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Gloom of Philip Roth," "The Adventures of Saul Bellow," "The Article As Art" and "The New Nihilism and the Novel." The last, written in 1958, contains this judgment: "The dilemma is that nothing seems to be left in the world to set an honest man's feelings on fire." (At how much more of a distant remove from the world was it possible to be in 1958? But then, Podhoretz was far from alone in that stance during those years.)

"Responses" also contains a justified dissent on John Updike, a superficial defense of Baldwin's *Another Country*, an essay on Norman Mailer's evolution up to 1959, which is too sanguine but generous in spirit and understanding. More intriguing than these, however, is the review of Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*, wherein he discloses its fatal flaw (Heller's awkward admission toward the end that the war, after all, had been worth fighting) but overpraises the rest of this book which is essentially a flat, undeveloped whoop of outrage. (In a similar way, most "establishment intellectuals" today are settling for so little in *Dr. Strangelove*. One result of being at a distant remove from the world is that vivid rhetoric can take on the appearance of at least pre-revolutionary attitudes.)

Most revealing of all is Podhoretz's 1958 *Partisan Review* attack on "The Know-Nothing Bohemians," in which Jack Kerouac is the principal, inflated target. Kerouac was and generally remains childish (not childlike) and even more ignorant than he is ingenuous. But there is a curious misreading of Kerouac by Podhoretz: "Even the relatively mild ethos of Kerouac's books can spill over easily into brutality, for there is a suppressed cry in those books: Kill the intellectuals who can talk coherently, kill those incomprehensible characters who are capable of getting seriously involved with a woman, a job, a cause. "On the contrary, what there is of an ethos in Kerouac consists of a huge yearning, however formless and disoriented, to find a way of life and feeling that will do away with the frustrations and compromises which create the *need* for violence, whether externalized or suppressed into self-laceration. In Podhoretz's essay, violence is in the beholder. It is Kerouac rather than Podhoretz who seems in danger of being mugged.

It is in the book's final section, "The World Out There," that the difficulties of the sophisticated, early-middle-aged intellectual in the real world become intensified. The section begins with a very occasional essay on 1953 television drama, followed by a series of book reviews. In one of them, a discussion of the Truman memoirs, the literary critic wandering amid public affairs commits an oversimplification of Truman (that "salt-of-the-earth American writ large" was considerably more complex and revelatory of the multi-crossed American grain than either Podhoretz or Truman realizes). Also revealing is Podhoretz's indignation about the Irish famine of the 1840s, in his review of Cecil Woodham-Smith's *The Great Hunger*. (And yet, as of 1958, "nothing seems to be left in our world to set an honest man's feelings on fire." How fortunate that *The Other America* and *The Fire Next Time* came along to energize us for the 1960s.)

The final two essays are the crucial confrontations in the book — confrontations between the way things are and the careful liberal with seemingly full heart and self-protectively disciplined intellect. In "Arendt on Eichmann: A Study in the Perversity of Brilliance," Podhoretz scornfully accuses Hannah Arendt in these terms: ". . . in place of the monstrous Nazi, she gives us the 'banal' Nazi; in place of the Jew as virtuous martyr, she gives us the Jew as accomplice in evil; and in place of the confrontation between guilt and innocence, she gives us the 'collaboration' of criminal and victim."

Although Miss Arendt's position has been widely debated — and, I might add, widely distorted — I think it necessary to re-emphasize her point about the "collaboration" of criminal and victim, as she stated it again in the January, 1964, *Encounter*: that during the periods when people were being collected for the concentration camps, "there was no possibility of resistance but there existed the possibility of *doing nothing*." Yet Judenräte *did* make it easier for the Nazis, and Jews did fall into line. As Bruno Bettelheim has pointed out, "The reason they could not and did not fight back"—or "do nothing"—"lay in their own inner feelings of impotence in the careful routing, over centuries, of any tendencies to rebel, the ingrained habit of believing that those who bend do not break."

This "ghetto thinking," as Bettelheim calls it, was not limited to the Jews. It was reflected in other masses of victims of the Nazis. And in this sense, until recently, most Negroes in this country had been Jews for hundreds of years. They have not been gassed or lynched lately, but they have been placed in our own form of concentration camps. In this sense too, all of us who quietly awaited the outcome of the Kennedy-Khrushchev confrontation over Cuba were Jews.

Furthermore, as the person of Eichmann demonstrated, millions of Nazis were not psychotic — not "monstrous" in the sense of being a radically different species from the rest of us. Eichmann fitted inconspicuously into life in Argentina. He could have functioned as "normally" in Des Moines in the 1950s. And for all the speculation, much of it convincing, about the "German character," how many Americans could have been an Eichmann? More than a few.

For all his exposure to corrective "liberal revisionism," Podhoretz still seems desperate to transmute Nazism into a neatly one-dimensional horror story having no apparent relevance to the way we prepare now for mass murder — including our own. He does not yet understand that the "banality" of evil comes from the fact that, as Hannah Arendt observes, "it can overgrow and lay waste the whole world precisely because it spreads like a fungus on the surface" and because it can envelop all who believe that "those who bend do not break."

The last essay, "My Negro Problem — and Ours," may or may not be largely solipsistic. I have no way of knowing how many whites had childhood experiences similar to those of Podhoretz and are equally unable to learn from them. What is dismaying, in any case, in this publicly courageous—and obtuse—dissection by Podhoretz of why he still fears and hates Negroes, is his failure as an adult to realize why the neighborhood Negroes who beat him as a boy were all too automatically able to regard the downtrodden "whites across the street and around the corner as jailers." Not that the term "jailers" was ever consciously formulated by the Negroes who menaced Podhoretz; but to many of those Negroes, anyone with a white face and with white chances to move out of the ghetto was an anonymous, oppressive stranger by the very fact of his existence. To them, young Norman Podhoretz was the "banal" face of evil because he certainly wasn't going to break his upward ascendance to move over to *their* side.

The enormous distance at which Podhoretz continues to stand from

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confronting his Negro problem "fully in the face" is clear from the fact that miscegenation is for him a "brutal" word. Moreover, "disgusting prurience" can stir in him at the sight of a mixed couple and "violence" can stir in him "whenever I encounter that special brand of paranoid touchiness to which many Negroes are prone."

In this essay, Podhoretz ritualistically cites the psychologists who "tell us that the white man hates the Negro because he tends to project those wild impulses he fears in himself onto an alien group which he then punishes with his contempt." But to what extent has Podhoretz actually coped with that analysis as it applies to himself? Why does the "paranoid touchiness" of Negroes stir *violence* in the beholder again? Why was his reaction to the innocuous Kerouac "beats" — another "alien" group (which tried in part to model itself after its utterly square stereotype of the Negro) — so focused on *violence*? And why is Podhoretz's "solution" to white-Negro relations "the wholesale merger of the two races"? — a solution which ignores what quite a few Negroes may want, not to mention Podhoretz's own "problem" in this area. Perhaps the idea attracts him because the mysterious color of black could thereby be diluted and made less threatening. In any case, fusion is so compelling an answer for him that he can be oblivious to the growing pride of black among Negroes and brutally oversimplify the history of the Negro in this country by proclaiming: "His past is a stigma, his color is a stigma."

Meanwhile, before the wholesale merging of the races can be accomplished, Podhoretz admits that along with fear of the Negro, he also feels envy: ". . . just as in childhood I envied Negroes for what seemed to me their superior masculinity, so I envy them today for what seems to me their superior physical grace and beauty. I have come to value physical grace very highly, and I am now capable of aching with all my being when I watch a Negro couple on the dance floor, or a Negro playing baseball or basketball. They are on the kind of terms with their own bodies that I should like to be on with mine, and for that precious quality they seem blessed to me."

Podhoretz speaks of "they." Middle-class Negro secretaries? Certainly not the middle-aged maids listlessly walking to the subway for the ride uptown? And does he ache only when he sees a Negro dancer or athlete? There are, after all, lithe young whites who perform with grace. It is a highly selective view of the physical appearance of Negroes which focuses on the young and graceful among them. Reading Podhoretz's tribute to "their superior physical grace and beauty" is like watching an MGM all-Negro musical in the 1930s. All God's chillun are lissome swingers. Where *do* they put the old and the ugly, the fat and the scrawny?

Among the letters which followed the original publication in *Commentary* of "My Negro Problem — and Ours" was this observation by Paul Goodman: ". . . miscegenation as a remedy is typical of his [Podhoretz's] avoidance of his own concrete reality." It is this sense of imperfect, emotionally truncated self-understanding that characterizes most of *Doings and Undoings* — the cool ease of much of the first section and the lack of urgency in the majority of the "Responses" in the second part. In the essay on Saul Bellow, for instance, we are told of "how great a gap had developed between the realities of experience in America and the moral vocabulary of the [Eisenhower] age," but the piece itself is emotionally detached from the dangerous and painful implications of that gap. Similarly, Podhoretz advises Bellow to "unambiguously locate the source of the malaise that afflicts" his protagonists "in the institutions under which they are forced to live." But the homily is calmly nonspecific. On the relatively few occasions when Podhoretz does communicate intense emotion, it is in reaction to a famine of a century ago or in a state of acute emotional confusion, as expressed in the essays on Hannah Arendt and "My Negro Problem — and Ours."

In his piece on Faulkner in "Traditions," Podhoretz claims that Faulkner never had ideas: "Convictions, yes, and a terrifying energy behind them, but not ideas, not the wish to understand the world, only the wish to feel deeply and to transcribe what he felt and saw." Why was that energy "terrifying"? And did Faulkner possess "only" the "wish to feel deeply," or was he instead aware of the need for a self-knowledge which would allow him to feel deeply enough to understand *his* world? The extent to which he succeeded is quite another debate.

A man who habitually takes refuge from confronting the full scope and depth of his feelings can — if he has superior intelligence plus some sense of style and taste — become a literary critic for whom "literature is not an end in itself" but is none the less sufficient armor against the infinitely more difficult problems of one's "own concrete reality." And the concrete reality of the world out there. Or he can, if he has other resources as well, become President of the United States in 1960 and acquire the cautious but yearning support of many of those early-middle-aged intellectuals to whom *Doings and Undoings* is — discreetly—addressed.

James Purdy: American Dreams

Webster Schott

James Purdy has a vision of our society dead and decaying, and he lives and writes in sorrow over the corpse.

"All of my work is a criticism of the United States, implicit not explicit," he said in a vehement letter. "This is a culture based on money and competition, is inhuman, terrified of love, sexual and other, obsessed with homosexuality and brutality. Our entire moral life is pestiferous and we live in a completely immoral atmosphere. . . . I believe the human being under capitalism is a stilted, depressed, sick creature, that marriage in the United States is homosexuality, and homosexuality a real disease, that we toil and enjoy and live for all the wrong reasons, and that our national life is a nightmare of noise, ugliness, filth and confusion. . . . I don't believe America has any future."

Purdy's indictment, elevated to art, becomes the uncommunicative conversations, fake tragedies, private brutalities, macabre ambiguities which form the surface of his fiction. Beneath that surface lies Purdy's conception of the American hell: hallucination has become reality; our identities are lost; wealth is sexual power; epidemic corruption maims or destroys the young and makes monsters of the old. Purdy tells us in public what we have been telling our psychiatrists in private.

His imagination shows no mercy,

Webster Schott is literary editor of Focus/Midwest *and reviews for a number of newspapers including the* St. Louis Post-Dispatch *and* The Christian Science Monitor.

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not even for mankind in general. "I believe human nature to be infirm," Purdy says, and a raving maniac pronounces the infirmity beyond remedy in a recent short story, "Sermon":

> *. . . There is a feeling of everything being not quite right. You feel if you only knew more or could do more you would be somewhere else. . . . You are wrong, and I am powerless to add or subtract from that fact. You came originally wrong, and you have been getting worse in every way since that day. There is, in fact, no hope for you and there never was. Even if you had never been born there would have been no hope for you. It was hopeless whether you arrived or not. Yet you all arrived, you got here, you are* here. *And it is all so meaningless, because you all know there is a better place for you than here. And that is the trouble. You will not accept the* hereness. *Red tadpoles, you are hopeless. . . .*

And the maniac, as the story finally reveals, is God.

Intensely private and as fixed in focus as a dime-store telescope, Purdy's work thus far constitutes the most arresting description of disassociation and human transgression to be found in American literature. It cannot be accounted for except in terms of naive genius and personal torment of the kind that would drive a man to self-destruction if he couldn't write. "I am not even writing novels," Purdy says. "I am writing *me*. I go on writing to tell myself at least what I have been through."

In eight years he has published four books: a collection of stories and a novella, *Color of Darkness* (New Directions, 1957), privately printed here in 1956, and published in England under the title of the novella, *63: Dream Palace;* two novels, *Malcolm* (Farrar, Straus, 1959), and *The Nephew* (Farrar, Straus, 1960); and the recent collection of stories with two short plays, *Children Is All* (New Directions, 1962). A new novel, *Cabot Wright Begins*, about a young Brooklyn rapist, will be published next fall. Purdy has been translated into fifteen languages, including Chinese, but remains, with John Hawkes, one of our most imaginative, unread writers.

Purdy's themes and techniques lie in the short stories, as if waiting for orchestration in the novels. He has almost no interest in objects or natural phenomena. People are his plots. Their circumstance is loveless isolation. Attempting to escape, they tear at the essence of one another. In "Don't Call Me by My Right Name," a husband beats his wife to the sidewalk because she demands that he change his name, his identity. In "Why Can't They Tell You Why?" a slattern mother drives her small son out of his mind by threatening to burn the box of photographs of his dead father he pores through in search of an authentic parent. In "Color of Darkness," a boy denies his father's marriage by attempting to swallow his wedding ring and then kicks the father in the testicles as if to negate his paternity. When Lafe Krause in "Man and Wife" tells Peaches Maud that he has lost his job because of homosexual accusations against him, and pleads to talk to her about it, she completes his defeat. "I can't bear to hear about anything that ain't human," she says.

One tends to remember Purdy's twenty-one short stories as really three or four stories in which a variety of characters have changed chairs; their faintly genteel names even repeat in several stories. An unfaltering tone of controlled hysteria is sustained from story to story by Purdy's ear for the American idiom. His abandoned children, separated husbands or wives, despoiled old women and lecherous old men talk their awkward language quietly, but what we hear are screams. His stories are riddled with real and imagined homosexuality. They hinge on threats of violence by couples married in hate, by the innumerable human beings who are joined in natural unions turned unnatural. Many take the form of deranged monologues or dialogues between characters who cannot communicate what they desperately want to tell. His characters are psychically ruined and economically dispossessed. From them we hear the last cries of human protest.

Inevitably, some of the stories (especially in *Children Is All*) are precious abandonments to spleen. But at least four — "Daddy Wolf," "Man and Wife," "Sound of Talking," "Why Can't They Tell You Why?" — move the contemporary short story to a point of vital contact with the main currents of European fiction — surrealism, distortionalism, anti-realism — and are likely to become American classics of the form. Yet his originality is wholly native and without academic anointment. His only models are Americans and their speech.

"All of my work is, I believe, poetry, and therefore to be spoken. I write it spoken. I am only incidentally

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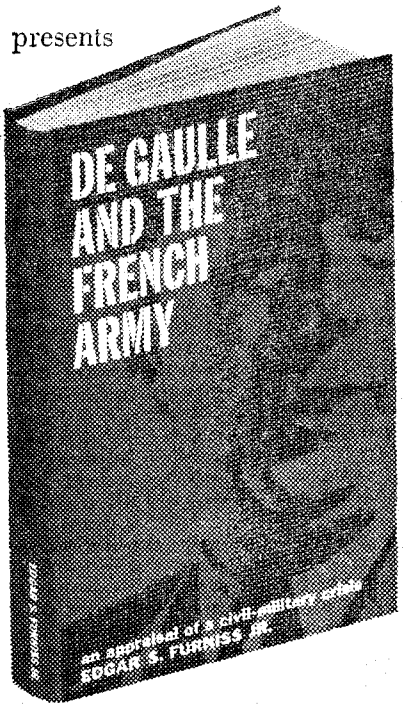

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a story teller," Purdy says. But he needs the length of the novel form both to give freedom to his imagination and to make from his dark "poetry" a cohesive statement of the American nightmare.

All the victims of his novels are children or young adults, because, as Purdy says, "There don't seem to be any men or women in America; there are those who are young and have everything before them — and then there are the others, mostly dead." The novels submit Purdy's young people to adult experience, becoming annals of the destruction of youth by the devices of elders, protests against the inevitable corrupting of innocence by social exposure.

Fenton Riddleway of *63: Dream Palace* murders his invalid brother, Claire, "because he knew that as long as there was Claire there was part of his old life with him." Fenton "wanted to destroy all that behind him and begin all over again" in a "new life" with Grainger, the ageless gin-soaked queen of hell, and her jack of spades, Parkhearst Cratty. *63: Dream Palace* is an introduction to the world of *Malcolm* where the promise of the "new world" is fulfilled in the form of "addresses" (a crazy Negro undertaker, an all-powerful millionaire and his bitch-goddess wife, a jazz-hooked madam, among others) supplied to the fifteen-year-old hero by the astrologer, Mr. Cox. Having given up the safety of his hotel bench to be matured by lunatics, Malcolm finally does grow up. He dies of "acute alcoholism and sexual hyperaesthesia," consumed in bed by Melba, "America's Number One Chanteuse."

Although the realism of *The Nephew* tends to deny its connection with the slightly comic and surrealistic *Malcolm* and *63: Dream Palace*, it has much in common with the other two, including the corruption of youth. Cliff Mason, the nephew whom no one really knows, serves everyone's purpose except his own. Launched into the adult world of alcohol, sex, money, and with none of the indemnification of love, he has to run off to Korea to be killed — in payment to his debtors.

Malcolm, Fenton, Cliff are all desired and consumed by adults precisely because they are innocent and possess what the adults have lost. Laureen Raphaelson, the whore married to the midget, expects to find out the truth about herself from Malcolm because (she repeats the exact words of Mr. Cox chapters earlier) "you are not yet corrupt." The homosexual neighbors of *The Nephew* keep a roomful of photographs of Cliff as a memorial to what they themselves lacked, but captured and destroyed. All of *63: Dream Palace* is written down by Parkhearst Cratty so Grainger can read about Fenton, their trophy of precorruption, on her "bad nights."

"I suppose one of the themes of my work is you must accept yourself and others, whatever they are," Purdy says. But the problem of identity continually blocks personal reconciliation in Purdy's fiction. The dead nephew's homosexuality cannot be established because no one knew who he was. The only flaw in the burial ceremony for Malcolm was the insistence of the coroner and the undertaker, before Madame Girard Girard paid them off, that there had been no corpse. "Fenton Riddleway is vague as a dream to me," Grainger tells Parkhearst Cratty at the start of *63: Dream Palace*. "That means he is more real to you than anybody," Parkhearst says to her; and Grainger, as if remembering a few notes from an alto sax, replies wistfully, "How could it mean anything else?" When the son in Purdy's longer play, *Children Is All*, returns home wounded after fifteen years in the penitentiary and dies in his mother's arms, she does not recognize him. "I feel so at ease with this perfect stranger who came in like from nowhere," Edna says.

The relationship between nonrecognition or loss of identity and everything else operating in James Purdy's fiction seems to me fundamental and consecutive. Personal identity disappears in his novels because of the conflicting requirements of role-playing and unsatisfied inner needs — a conflict that cannibal intimacy cannot assuage. The unhinged events and crazy human usage of Purdy's surreal world, the gratuitous symbols and unresolved ambiguities that give flight to the imagination follow as Purdy's evidence of the infinite varieties of real "unreality." They testify to the difficulty of separating the authentic from the fraudulent, the possible from the probable. And if Purdy's characters cannot isolate reality, then they cannot tell one another what it is they must have —compassion and affection—because they have no common understanding about what is happening to them. They can drive themselves to sexual possession, a charade of love, but they cannot love because love requires an ordering of reality, the identification of personality and acts of self-denial.

Under these circumstances Purdy's masculine women and effeminite men, his mechanistic sex and stolen familiarity become logical. The social disintegration of *Malcolm*, the love-hate of *63: Dream Palace*, the discovery of the nephew *after* he is dead, the condemned wanderings of Purdy's characters and their habitual demands for more information, are rational consequences of a largely irrational reality.

James Purdy's hell-world holds together. It makes sense. And it comes to life with all the force of felt experience because Purdy observes the exact gesture, hears the almost untransmittable overtones of speech, detects the clues to arcane psychic disturbance of human beings in distress and transforms them from the banal to the visionary. Every word of his fiction is chosen.

Purdy, the forty-one-year-old former Spanish teacher from Lawrence College who considers himself a "reject" from our society and lives "in exile" in Brooklyn because there is no place else to go, surely has one kind of truth. Anyone who doubts it may read Eric Fromm's *The Art of Loving* on the relationship between capitalism and pseudo-love and individual alienation. What I find lacking in his fiction is the total view. For humanity to fall, there must be a height. *63: Dream Palace* hints at it. Before strangling Claire, Fenton "felt more love and pity for him than ever before . . . he knew he loved him more than any other human being." But this depth of sensibility is revealed by few of Purdy's characters other than Fenton and Aunt Alma in *The Nephew*. The redemptive quality of love can only be inferred from Purdy's work. It is almost never observed.

Purdy himself offers substitutes for love—pity, which is love turned hopeless, and comedy, which makes pity bearable. These are responses as complex and problematical as love, but they do not ameliorate the utter depression of Purdy's one-eyed view. There are, after all, degrees in hell. And yet: "I don't see despair in my writing," Purdy says in one of his letters, "because I think my work is the truth. . . . We live in the stupidest cultural era of American history. It is so stupid it inspires me."

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The Case Against the Britannica

THE MYTH OF THE BRITANNICA. By Harvey Einbinder. Grove Press. 390 pp. $7.50.

Robert Hatch

Judging by the number, and enthusiasm, of the notices written for this rather specialized book, a considerable part of the journalistic community must bear grudges against the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Perhaps, as in an anecdote about Alec Waugh recalled by Dr. Einbinder, they have suffered the queasy experience of feeling the thin ice of the *Britannica's* authority crack beneath them.

Most of us have been bullied by the *Encyclopaedia* since childhood and part of the pleasure in reading this massively documented attack is to be told that our omniscient British nanny is a pretentious, harried and none too reputable addlepate. The assumption that the E. B. contains all the facts, we are now told, is ludicrously optimistic; worse yet, a significant percentage of what it presents as fact (or authoritative opinion) turns out to be obsolete, prejudiced, superficial or old wives' tales. By the time Dr. Einbinder has completed his prosecutor's summation, the *Britannica* is clinging to its trappings of prestige with the pathetic futility of Carroll's White Queen.

And the other pleasure of the book is to observe Dr. Einbinder at work. If he will forgive the expression, he has something of an encyclopedic mind himself. Furthermore, he has the kind of energy that is enjoyed only by really outstanding eccentrics. The E. B.'s nemesis is a consulting physicist, and since he is employed by General Electric on the Atlas missile project, he must be a reasonably busy man.

However, several years ago he discovered that the *Britannica* was still handing out the old yarn about Galileo's dropping weights from the Tower of Pisa, and since then he has submitted its volumes to a scrutiny that would be a life's vocation for a normally endowed and dedicated man. He does not say how many of its pages he has actually read, but he includes as an appendix a list of 666 articles in the 1963 edition which appear also in the ninth (1875-89), tenth (1902-03) or eleventh (1910-11) editions. His chapters, detailed and colorful, touch on his elephantine victim's treatment of history, science, religion, literature, great lives, political theory, music and sex, among other themes, and his evident joy in displaying his polyvalent erudition spills over into appended notes on Parnell's amatory difficulties, Swift's attack on John Partridge (Swift, by the way, is not mentioned in the E. B.'s present essay on satire), Verdi's composition of *Otello* and *Falstaff* and Betsy Ross's claim to our patriotic regard.

Needless to say, he gives close attention to the *Encyclopaedia's* publishing history, from its nineteenth-century birth in Edinburgh, through its association with the *Times* of London and Cambridge University, and its sale to Sears, Roebuck, to its present very profitable relationship with the University of Chicago. From early in its career, the atmosphere of the *Britannica* has been an odd blend of scholarly dedication and enterprising salesmanship, but Dr. Einbinder detects over the years a melancholy shift of emphasis from the library to the market place. The editions, he finds, are not getting better, they are not even holding their own; the decline of the set as a compendium of our culture's best knowledge and most refined judgment, says the author, proceeds ever more rapidly from decade to decade.

Dr. Einbinder exposes some rather shabby practices. For example, the E. B. is falling further and further out of date, and its editors now make a practice of dropping the identifying initials (often very distinguished initials) of contributors who have been dead for so many generations that their appearance in the role of final authority is patently absurd. And when articles are revised, the method, it seems, is to cut opinion, allusion, reference and insight, thus providing growing space for the bones of information by stilling the heart of wisdom.

In the end, Dr. Einbinder sternly calls on the proprietors of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* to abandon their pretenses and reorder their ways. And unless they can have him declared subversive or irrational — neither proposition would seem to me plausible — they will almost certainly be forced to heed him: he is reaching the public ear. Yet what can these men do with the dinosaur they have by the tail? Their impatient crittic assumes that the E. B. can be made again what it once was (and still pretends to be):

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"a mirror of contemporary learning." It is only a matter of swinging the emphasis from promotion to erudition, of spending enough money to hire enough scholars of sufficient learning, vision and literary elegance. He cites with admiration the career of Thomas Young, who early in the nineteenth century contributed more than sixty articles of high quality to the *Encyclopaedia* on Chromatics, Tides, Bridges, Language, Carpentry, Egypt, and so on. Who today, except possibly Dr. Einbinder, can spread himself so wide? Knowledge, in this age of alarming explosions, not only proliferates new disciplines, but expands the data within every discipline at a geometrically accelerating rate. If the E.B. could put a regiment of Einbinders to work, it would still find itself shoveling sand against the tide.

The real "myth" of the *Encyclopaedia* is that the total of human knowledge can today be compiled and kept current by the most dedicated and talented of editorial staffs, and that it can still be compressed into anything that would pass as a set of volumes rather than a whole library. Probably we can never again know the satisfaction of having the world's wisdom at our finger tips. The *Encyclopaedia*, then (and probably the eleventh edition rather than the current one), should be preserved as a monument, and we should reconcile ourselves to using some more aseptic tool. It might still be possible, for example, to maintain a bibliography, even a qualitative bibliography, of our culture, and while that would not give the common reader convenient access to the experts, it would send serious curiosities on the right approaches to knowledge. Even that project would eventually be overwhelmed, but by then information may be computerized and the transistor able to pigeonhole knowledge as fast as the brain invents it.

Antennae to Knowledge

EXPRESSIONS OF SEA LEVEL. By A. R. Ammons. Ohio State University Press. 83 pp. $4.

Wendell Berry

In this admirable book, Mr. Ammons' aim isn't beauty, though there are poems here that I think are beautiful, and it's not the suggestiveness which is sometimes meant by the word "poetic." His aim is knowledge, the getting of it and the use of it; the art of poetry is held out to the world like an antenna. A man who is concerned with knowing must necessarily be concerned with what he does not know; and one of the principles here is an honesty which insists on clarifying the difference and will then consider what is unknown or unaccountable: "I admit to mystery / in the obvious. . . ." The suggestive is confined to what is authentically mysterious. These poems take place on the frontier between what the poet knows and what he doesn't; perhaps that explains their peculiar life and sensitivity. They open to accommodate surprises and accidents. The poet's interest is extended generously toward what he didn't expect, and his poems move by their nature in that direction.

The poems are worked out, not by the application of set forms to their materials, but in an effort to achieve form—in accordance with a constant attentiveness to, a hope for, the possibility of form—the need of anything, once begun, to complete itself, meaningfully. Mr. Ammons' way in this can be seen in the poem called "Mechanism." The movement begins with a goldfinch lighting in a bush:

> *the yellow*
> *bird flashes black wing bars*
> *in the new-leaving wild cherry*
> *bushes by the bay. . . .*
>
> *flitting to a branch where*
> *flash vanishes into stillness. . . .*

And then there's a consideration of the multitudinous biological dependences of the goldfinch—all the minute causes and effects of digestion, sex, instinct, habitat, etc., almost inscrutably complex, and involving a kind of miracle: "mind rising / from the physical chemistries. . . ." The poem then returns to the bird itself, a model of the world, both containing and caught up in the natural workings, ignorant of all of them, singing on its perch: the

> *goldfinch, unconscious of the billion*
> *operations*
> *that stay its form, flashes,*
> *chirping (not a*
> *great songster) in the bay cherry*
> *bushes wild of leaf.*

The form here is circular; we wind up where we started. But by the time we've come all the way around, though the bird hasn't changed, we have. We've learned something. We see differently, and better. We've seen the world working, which is not only informative but dramatic. This gives a fair idea of how Mr. Ammons goes about his task. He attempts to mediate, make or discover an intelligible continuity between the complex and the simple, the vast and the small, the overruling laws of creation and the creatures.

In several of the poems there's a large proportion of scientific language. In the following you can see how the scientific talk is broken into, made flexible, by the commoner language of everyday:

> *Honor a going thing, goldfinch,*
> *corporation, tree,*
> *morality: any working order*
> *animate or inanimate: it*
>
> *has managed directed balance,*
> *the incoming and outgoing energies*
> *are working right. . . .*

However, in lines where the language is predominantly or purely scientific the effect the poet's ear can have on it is extremely limited:

> *honor the chemistries, platelets,*
> *hemoglobin kinetics,*
> *the light-sensitive iris, the*
> *enzymic intricacies*
> *of control. . . .*

That language is by nature stiff, like a wooden shoe. No conceivable amount of use would limber it up. Except for the word "honor," the poet is taking the scientific vocabulary pretty much as it comes. About all he can hope to do with it, as a poet, is to place it exactly within the larger rhythm of his poem — everything seems to depend on that.

"Mechanism," I believe, makes more use of this kind of language than any of the others. But so many of the poems include lines or passages that have the cadences of prose that I assume it must be deliberate, part of Mr. Ammons' usual method. The only near-equivalent or precedent for this, so far as I know, is the gathering in of prose quotations, statistics, etc., in such modern poems as *Paterson* and *The Cantos*. And it works, I think, the same way: the prose detail is admitted raw into the poem, not to be transformed into poetry by it but to be illuminated or newly

Wendell Berry's poem, "November 26, 1964," which first appeared in The Nation, *is being published with Ben Shahn's drawings by George Braziller this spring. His first collection of poems will be published by Harcourt, Brace in the fall.*

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clarified by the energy with which the poem surrounds it—and to serve the poem in some way in which only prose can serve it. This use of prose in poems may be justified by the poet's conviction that poetry might legitimately deal with subject matter which is customarily the subject matter of prose — his realization that some of the things he knows and is concerned about are new, and haven't been prepared for poetry by any considerable period of association or usage. What I'm indicating here is that Mr. Ammons aims to bring science into his poems as *subject matter*, not just to borrow words or images from it.

The poet attempting to lay hold of such materials is up against the possibility of enlarging the powers and working spaces of his art at the risk of weakening it. The effort is experimental in the purest sense of the word, and involves the risk of experiment. The only measure for it is: Does it work? Can the reader take it in?

I think that Mr. Ammons makes it work often and well. The poetry doesn't inhere consistently in the verbal texture of the poems, but in the forms, the arrangements of the contents. Sometimes the reader is unsure that what he's reading is poetry until he has read all the way through. But when he comes to the end of a poem like "Mechanism"—which attempts to bring to bear on the image of the singing bird, and to bring under the control of that poetic image, all that the poet *knows* about it — he's conscious that a unifying exciting energy has been released among the subject matters; and he knows that it's the energy of poetry, which takes over the language of science only as a resource, and causes it to belong to a larger, more exuberant statement than the specialized vocabulary alone could make. "Mechanism" isn't a biologist's poem; it's the poem of a poet who knows biology.

There's a nearly opposite kind of Ammons poem, represented here by "Nelly Myers," "Hardweed Path Going" and "Silver." These poems recollect the poet's country boyhood. Again the use of prose, this time a kind of narrative prose, is characteristic. And again the necessity for prose seems one of the conditions imposed by the materials. Here the subject matter is not difficult because, like the scientific, it has been kept pure of emotional or literary associations; it's difficult because it has been too much and too poorly written about — too much condescended to, you could say, by the conventions that claim to have been invented for it. I'm talking about all the oversweetening, distortion, falsification that have been left sticking to rural things by the pastoralizers, sentimentalizers and folksifiers since God knows when. Such things are usually both written and read about in a kind of institutional blindness to the sweat, crap, blood, and biting insects which are as much a part of the real experience as white lambs and new-mown hay. Mr. Ammons' poems of this life manage an honesty about it which is an achievement. He proceeds in these as he does in the poems of scientific lore, keeping a respectful loyalty to what he knows, refusing to think of it or write about it in any falsifying rhetoric. It must be given to the reader in the most direct way, otherwise there can be no meeting of minds.

The poem "Nelly Myers" is about a simple-minded woman of that name, a maker of brooms, who lived with the poet's family during his boyhood. The difficulty of writing this poem must have been Mr. Ammons' sense both of the uniqueness and the meaningfulness of her life, the presence of her life in his life. The two would, I imagine, have tended to cancel each other out: her uniqueness would have threatened to overpower her meaningfulness, make it incommunicable; or to emphasize the meaningfulness might have reduced her to a stereotype. Mr. Ammons' solution is to be openly personal. Some of the details of the poem are given with the directness, not even of prose fiction, but of biography:

my grandmother, they say, took her in
when she was a stripling run away from home
(her mind was not perfect
which is no bar to this love song
for her smile was sweet,
her outrage honest and violent)
and they say that after she worked all day her relatives
would throw a handful of dried peas into her lap
for her supper
and she came to live in the house
I was born in the
northwest room of . . . .

The poem is an elegy, and the relaxed passages of description or narrative support and give their specificness of feeling to an elegiac lyricism which is authentic and power-

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ful, and which charges not just the passages in which it occurs purely, but the whole poem:

oh I will not end my grief
that she is gone, I will not end
my singing;
my songs like blueberries
felt-out and black to her searching
fingers before light
welcome her
wherever her thoughts ride with
mine, now or in any time
that may come
when I am gone; I will not end
visions of her naked feet
in the sandpaths: I will hear her
words

We're moved by Wordsworth's solitary highland lass because she's seen at a distance, and the poet is left free to suppose and suggest. We're moved by Nelly Myers because we're brought very close to her. She's not idealized, nor idealizable—she's too much present, we know too much about her. The power of the poem is that we're made to know her as she was, and to care for her as she was. Only the sympathy approaches some kind of ideal.

There is a wonderful eagerness in this book, a whetted appetite for the phenomena of seashores and farms and landscapes and factories. And the interest is not directed at things as objects or appearances, but at their ways—how they act, how they mix. The excitement of anything is that it moves, changes, influences other things — "boundless in its effect, / eternal in the working out / of its effect. . . ." Each poem is, in a way, an ecology — the revelation of a harmony which is both found and made.

ARCHITECTURE

Walter McQuade

There are several slightly unreal aspects about the pair of skyscrapers proposed to house the World Trade Center in lower West Side Manhattan. The first is their height — 1,353 feet — a full 100 feet higher than the top of the Empire State Building. True, that is not as high as the Empire State antenna, but perhaps in time the newer towers would also sprout antennae. The fact that this project would then include not just the tallest building in the world, but the *two* tallest, would be enough to give most developers pause. Or maybe not. Developer is such a blandly marvelous modern word — properly nonspecific, pliable, basketlike. I sometimes think back to the days when things used just to develop — before a need for developers did.

The developer of the World Trade Center is not an ordinary, or even an unspecific, one — and this is the second somewhat unreal aspect of the situation. These towers would be built by the Port of New York Authority and presumably financed by those wonderful P.A. bonds that are snatched off the Wall Street counter by large investors whenever offered. There is no reason why they shouldn't be bought fast — they are very sturdy, tax-exempt municipals, backed by one of the surest things going, the gigantic New York City transportation complex owned by the P.A. — bridges, tunnels, airports, bus terminals, etc.— a group of income properties which make the P.A. bonds better buys than the city's own.

The Port Authority was originally created by the governors of New York and New Jersey to take on those functions too large or too difficult to be handled by private entrepreneurs (later to be known as developers), or even those old public entrepreneurs, the cities themselves. Yet can it be argued that today's developers are unable to provide office space? In the last three years they have developed some 16 million square feet of it on Manhattan alone, and they are, by report, raring to produce more—for example, a world trade center or two. The local real estate fraternity has been quick to resent what it regards as the P.A.'s potential invasion of their own function, and one can sympathize with them. After all, Zeckendorf has never threatened to bore a tunnel under the Hudson River, and charge motorists only 49c to travel through it.

The P.A.'s office building project for lower Manhattan does appear to offer better architecture than most of the commercial space developed recently, but there are some slightly unreal touches about the design, too. The designer is Minoru Yamasaki, and in aspect his twin towers seem quite graceful, if just a little frail in character. Possibly anything that tall would seem frail at first look, but it is also fair to point out that Yamasaki has sometimes been prey to a kind of baseless elegance, an archaic modern mannerism, in his famous designs. Certainly these latest are ingenious buildings. Underground would be a confluence of transportation facilities. In the towers themselves the office workers would transfer from express elevators to vertical locals on three "terminal floors," thus cutting the time of the ride and at the same time increasing the rentable space which otherwise would have to be devoted to full-height elevator shafts. Architects have long tinkered with ways to break the problem of shaft space in truly tall buildings. One recent proposal suggested two-floor elevators, to be loaded on two lobby levels, but it didn't get built. It is reasonable that the P.A., which really does know how to handle people, would solve this diminishing-returns situation. In structural design, the towers are novel too, but that is a more technical matter.

By far the largest architectural gesture of the design — even larger than the height of the towers — is the proposal to build a wide outdoor plaza on the sixteen-acre site, a courtyard approximately 350 feet square to be devoted to planted areas, restaurants and other pleasantries. This could really be nice, and in Yamasaki's hands, almost certainly would be. It has been compared in concept with St. Mark's Square, and there is reality to the comparison, for this plaza would be almost a third as large as that great folkway, Washington Square.

It would, however, be a lot more private, almost completely walled in by the two towers and a row of lower buildings all around. Because of the continuous shield around this plaza (there appears to be just one opening, albeit a wide one) the project might have relatively little effect in rejuvenating its neighborhood. Remember that Rockefeller Center, to the puzzlement of city planners, had but very little effect on Sixth Avenue until very late in the present boom. That was because the Rockefeller Center builders put the vast RCA Building smack between the skating rink and Sixth, walling out the avenue to the west. It was only when Time-Life and the other new structures on Sixth came along with their own little plazas that Sixth changed in those latitudes from an avenue specializing in corned beef-on-rye sandwiches and discount suitcases.

That the P.A. managers are sharp businessmen is again evident: they

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are creating a marvelous space but, by surrounding it with a wall of commerce, are drawing from it all the sustenance there is to be had. In contrast, places like the Seagram plaza and the skating rink at Rockefeller Center can be seen and enjoyed even from a passing taxicab. So, in a city-planning sense, there would seem to be little enough reason for New York to encourage this scheme with tax-abatement.

For that, of course, is the real issue, not architecture. The city's tax yield from this parcel of land is reported at present to be $1,500,000 annually. After the completion of some $350 million in improvements, the P.A. has suggested it would not ride by on its tax-free status, but might pay the city about $3 million annually in lieu of taxes, with some fairly vague wordage about more in lieu money later. One justification is the fact that New York State would be one of the principal tenants of these towers. If, instead of delegating the building to the P.A. the state were itself to put up a building on Manhattan, it would be totally tax-free. Nevertheless, the case seems moot as to whether the state can pass this privilege on. It could not do so to an ordinary commercial builder from which it rented space.

Tax-abatement has a number of very necessary uses for a city today. The one most in the news at present is the encouragement of the construction of low- and middle-income apartment houses, such as the New York State Mitchell-Lama program, which is a clear success. Unlike past federal middle-income projects, Mitchell-Lama somehow does end up costing well below $100 a room in Manhattan, sometimes less than a third of that. Families can afford it; cities covet families; it works.

It is apparent, however, that a city that goes in for unnecessary tax-abatement is digging itself into a fiscal hole. And, again, it is very difficult to see that the creation of speculative office space on Manhattan needs very much encouragement. The Yamasaki buildings would be marvelous additions to the skyline; they would be a grand double-eyrie from which the P.A. managers could keep watch on their far-flung improvements. Closer up, the complex would take the tinge of poverty from yet another few blocks of the city. But there is such a thing as going to the poor house in high style. In ways, the P.A. development is a reverse of the situation in which the city has taxed Seagram at an abnormally high rate for its pools and plaza (this case is again in the courts, incidentally). At any rate, I'm waiting with real interest for the hearings before the New York Board of Estimate on these slightly magic towers.

THEATRE

Harold Clurman

The Jean-Louis Barrault-Madeleine Renaud Théâtre de France company has had another understandably successful engagement at the City Center. It is almost obligatory to salute the occasion. Many of us entertain a chronic nostalgia for everything French, including an abiding delight in the language. Without the periodic visits of the Comédie Française, together with those of its recent Left Bank partner, the Barrault-Renaud ensemble, we should probably never see plays by Beaumarchais and Racine or an Offenbach musical in "the original."

There is something perennially youthful in the Théâtre de France, despite the ripe age of such actors as Pierre Bertin, an excellent comedian, Madeleine Renaud and Barrault himself. This impression of youthfulness has something to do with an airy, "birdlike" elocution which marks the company as a whole—as if the ladies were all light sopranos, the men all tender tenors. Without being noticeably stylized in their speech, the actors all seem to sing in a vein of sweetly amused relish at the lines they deliver. Added to this there is about the company a spirit of enthusiastic dedication which smacks of the amateur in every sense of the word.

What is missing is full dramatic weight, a tight hold and a sharp bite. A literary affability takes the place of power. Thus *Le Mariage de Figaro* is rendered delicately and rather conventionally eighteenth century, with emphasis on the exquisite; whereas there is in the play much more sarcasm and the revolutionary drive of dissidence, the impatient urge of a new class eager to upset the gilded carriages of the decrepit nobility. The Barrault production is cutely feminine; Beaumarchais is more virile, tougher.

The production of *Andromaque* is rhetorically closer to Racine, in good part because of the lovely grandeur and passion of Geneviève Page, than is the *Figaro* to its author.

Ionesco's *Le Pieton dans l'Air*, translated in the program as "Pedestrian of the Air," is a sort of improvisation on most of that writer's themes. There is the wry kidding of bourgeois banality, a hint of humorous despair at the writer's noncreative impasse, the suggestion that we can go no further because he can go no further, a mockery at our (really, Ionesco's) dismay at death, a touching whimsicality and a little heartbreak at the savagery and dismay of our times. The whole is repetitive but not without a screwy charm and a modest pathos.

Barrault's pantomime in levitation in this play is Barrault at his best. His final moments of muted anguish when he describes what he saw in his flight into the atmosphere of the "anti-world" is his most expressive bit of *acting* during this season's engagement. As a player, Barrault is essentially a mime and a miniature portraitist of eccentric (or "far-out") types.

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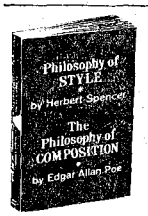

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pany in its most characteristic aspect —full of zest and incomplete theatrical means. It is fun to see how much may be done by a cast that cannot sing or dance to convey the adorably mad temper of the wily Parisian-German-Jewish laureate of the Second Empire, Jacques Offenbach.

There is so little fine theatre to be enjoyed in the playhouses these days that to renew our sense of the theatre's stature we must turn to a book. To this end I recommend a new edition of Ibsen's *Letters and Speeches*, selected by Evert Sprinchorn and published in the Hill and Wang Drama-book series ($2.45). This book affords something more than literary pleasure; it permits us to encounter a man.

Ibsen was a poor correspondent; he wrote comparatively few letters. He is constantly apologizing for his tardiness in replying to the communications of his friends. Nor did he strive for eloquence or elegance in writing to them. The image which forms from a reading of Ibsen's letters is that of a tight-lipped personality immured in a formidably compact body in which mind and soul are slowly and painstakingly weaving a perdurable fabric of thought and feeling. Here is stamina, integrity, probity, courage. Its outer appearance is gruff, its content solid and lofty.

Beyond the person we perceive the vista of another epoch—almost, one is tempted to say, the last *serious* epoch of history. We breathe the air of the heavy but still lyrical earnestness of the nineteenth century, an age which, for all its iconoclasm, held beliefs, possessed convictions.

Between 1849 and 1899, Ibsen wrote some twenty-six plays—a number of them of epic proportion. He also wrote several volumes of verse. Finding Norway backward, provincial, narrowly and dully rigid in its Protestantism, hostile to the germinal nature of his talent, Ibsen spent twenty-seven years in Italian and German exile. Most of his plays were published before they were produced and he attended very few of their first performances, which took place almost everywhere but in his native country. His message and craft struck the keynote of the era of a developing capitalism critical of itself. He constructed a new conscience which possessed both the efficient force of the emerging mercantile and industrial world and the insight to reveal what was diseased in it. Ibsen was both builder and destroyer—a prophetic giant in both functions.

"Whatever I have written," he said in 1898, "has been without any conscious thought of making propaganda. I have been more the poet and less the social philosopher. . . . My task has been the description of humanity." (When a critic, reviewing *Peer Gynt*, expressed doubts as to Ibsen's inspiration, the playwright wrote: "My book is poetry. And if it is not, then it shall be. The conception of poetry in our country shall be made to conform to my book.") He attacked the conservatives. He was more than a little skeptical of the "liberal" fiber. He believed in the restorative powers of the working class and the increasing collaboration of women in the making of the future. But the essence of his social sentiment is contained in a note he set down in an autograph album (1895): "The absolutely imperative task of democracy is to make itself aristocratic."

It is a cliché of our theatre to insist that good plays are always and immediately successful. In the editor's note to these letters we learn that the first performances of *Hedda Gabler*, given in Munich in 1891, and the ensuing productions in Berlin, Stockholm, Copenhagen and finally in Norway, were all failures. "Whistling and laughing constantly interrupted the performances." "*Ghosts*," Ibsen wrote, "will probably cause alarm in certain circles, but that cannot be helped. If it did not, it would not have been necessary to write it." Later, after the play had aroused a storm, he wrote, "I am not in the least disturbed by the violence of the reviews and all the crazy nonsense written about *Ghosts*. I was prepared for it. When *Love's Comedy* appeared, there was as great an outcry as now. *Peer Gynt* too was reviled. So was *The Pillars of Society*, so was *A Doll's House*. The cry will die away this time just as it did before. . . ." Where are the playwrights today with such fortitude, and where, oh where, are the writers whose work justifies such confidence?

Ibsen had the special pride the artist needs to survive; he had the stern humility that is as essential. The lines I prefer above all in these letters are: "Living is a war with the trolls in the depths of the mind and heart; *writing means summoning oneself to court and playing the judge's part.*"

This collection of letters is full of such admirable things. To cap it all one finds, in the dominant correspondence with Georg Brandes, an answer to those who ask how a critic may serve the creative artist.

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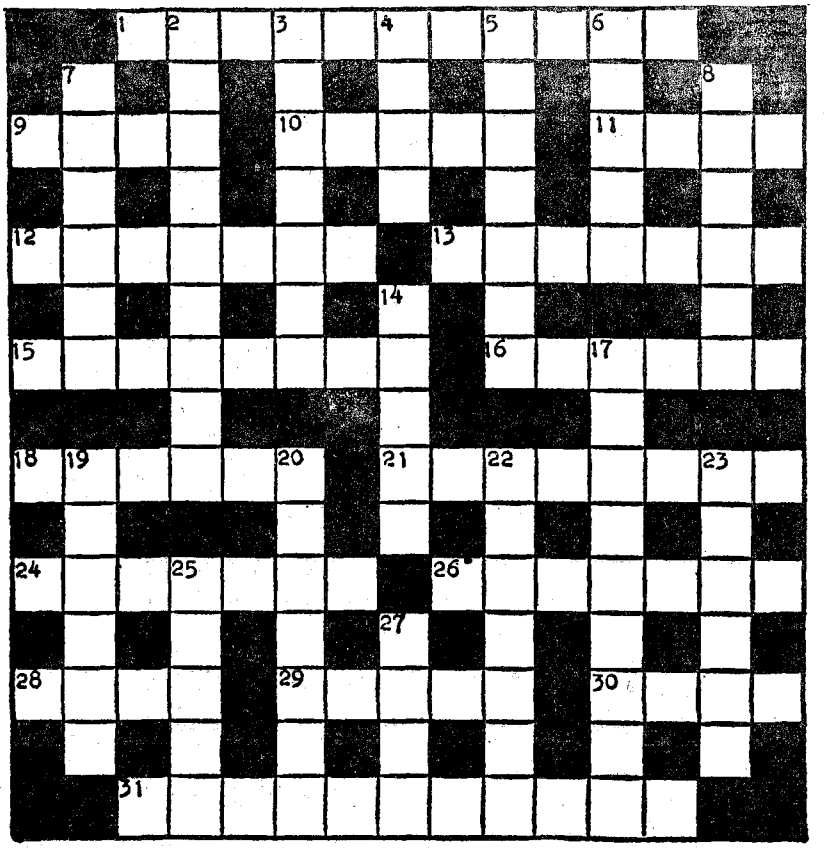
Crossword Puzzle No. 1051

By FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS:

1 Rush the lookout — it means extra protection. (5, 6)
9 It might be considered a halter for a horse. (4)
10 Evidently a number in session stay for a while. (5)
11 Obviously an animal to notice. (4)
12 Show anger? You can't expect to have a brush otherwise. (7)
13 See 7 down
15 The relinquishment of payment with something on hand in foreign cash. (8)
16 Impose a burden on a minister in a moneyless 21. (6)
18 The spirit of the thing is reflexive.
21 Check on the 24 for one, possibly. (4, 4)
24, 14 down and 4 down Knowledgeable about grandfather on the shelf, but getting certain direction. (16)
26 Those who like to cut up at dinner parties might be caught doing it.
28 Order that might be drawn. (4)
29 Is part of the picnic a rollicking tune? (5)
30 Doesn't suggest a very forceful period. (4)
31 Usually smaller than the 28 type, but the company might clean up with them. (5, 6)

DOWN:

2 Happen to be a partner is wrong?
3 Only a little flower. (7)
4 See 24 down
5 Pays attention to the fact that certain desserts are forbidden. (7)
6 Not safe with a type of game that should at least match your income. (5)
7 and 13 Tennyson wrote one, but a 21 should never be put on it. (6, 7)
8 Mild imprecation on the transport of grass. (6)
14 See 24 across
17 It could be the "0" was valid as a mark of repudiation. (9)
19 Below the head god of hammer and hewer. (6)
20 Swindles, although Pope mentions the ones of descending snows in the Iliad. (7)
22 Bird or animal about the rampart.
23 Not so short a time for one who desires things. (6)
25 A leader, and though rising, he gets the run-around in a way. (5)
27 He finally should make this order twist. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1050

ACROSS: 1 My goodness; 6 Beef; 11 and 10 A matter of habit; 12 Long; 13 Overheated; 15 Grampus; 16 What's up; 17 Tractor; 20 Tweeter; 22 Opalescent; 23 Worm; 25 Ant bear; 26 Galleon; 27 Airs; 28 Astronauts. DOWN: 1 Moonlight Sonata; 2 Gehenna; 3 Orbs; 4 Natives; 5 Sparrow; 7 Estates; 8 Fire departments; 9 Palefaces; 14 Sputtered; 18 Adapter; 19 Records; 20 Tanager; 21 Thoreau; 24 Plan.

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